THE MIDDLE WAY BETWIXT Necessity and Freedom.

A DISCOURSE CONTAINING *TWO SERMONS*

PREACHED AT

St. MARY's in CAMBRIDGE.

By JOHN TURNER, *late Fellow of Christ-Colledge in that University.*

Οὐ παντὸς ἀνθρώπου εἰς κόρινθον ὁ πλοῦς.

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Reverendiſſimo in Chriſto Patri

ac Domino,

D. HENRICO

Epiſcopo Londinenſi,

Sacelli, quod eſt in Ædibus Palatinis ab Albo Tectorio nomen ſortientibus,
DECANO;

Regiæque Majeſtati in Auguſtis Penetralibus de ſumma rerum ſecretò conſulenti, Fortiſſimo, Sagaciſſimo, Fideliſſimóq; Aſſeſſori,

JOANNES TURNER,

Collegii Chriſti in Almâ Cantabrigienſi non ita pridem Socius,

Paternitatis ejus recenti beneficio voluntatéque erga ſe egregiâ ſublevatus, hoc quicquid eſt operis à ſe exantlati, mole quidem exiguum, ſed momento magnum, obſequio devotionéque offerentis multò maximum, unà cum ſeipſo,

D. D. D. L. M. Q.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE READER.

THis Diſcourſe is word for word, as the Title pretends, what was Preached in two Sermons at St. Maries *at* Cambridge, *a place where there are as good Judges, though not ſo many cenſurers as we have here at* London; *I Printed it becauſe I thought it might do good, and for no other reaſon, and I have added to it a large diſcourſe in Vindication and defence of it, wherein the true bounds of* Neceſſity *and* Freedom *will be more accurately ſtated, which I have promiſed Mr.* Sympſon *ſhall follow it by the Commencement, and I will be as good as my word. God grant that the conſideration of that truth which is in theſe papers endeavoured to be made out, may have that influence which it ought to have upon your life and mine.*

Farewell.

ERRATA.

PAge 7. *Line* 2. *read* a jealousie. *P.* 11. *L.* 16. *read* objector. *P.* 20. *L.* 15. *read* at his. *P.* 44. *L.* 13. *read* Cabiri. *ib.* Divi Potes. *P.* 50. *L.* 21. *read* hearers. *P.* 71. *L.* 24. *read* information. *P.* 76. *L.* 9. *read* discerent. *P.* 79. *L.* 19. *read* Ahijah. *P.* 95. *L. ult. read* that in.

24 OC 62

Exod. 4. 21.

And the Lord ſaid unto Moſes, when thou goeſt to return into Egypt, ſee that thou do all thoſe Wonders before Pharaoh, *which I have put into thine hand, but I will harden his Heart that he ſhall not let the People go.*

IT may ſeem very ſtrange at firſt ſight, that God ſhould harden the heart of *Pharaoh*, and by that means be the occaſion, nay, the neceſſary and irreſiſtible cauſe of his not letting the people go, and yet inflict ſo many and ſo diſmal Calamities upon him and his people; that if he had hardened it himſelf, and if this Obſtinacy of his had been his fault, as it ſeems to have been his Miſfortune, he could not have been more ſharpely treated for it than he was; but

let it be never ſo ſtrange, it is not more ſtrange than true.

For that this hardning of *Pharaoh*'s heart, was a thing of Gods doing, and that *Pharaoh* himſelf could not poſſibly avoid it, is ſo plain from the expreſs words of Scripture, *Exod.* 14. 21. *c.* 7. 13, 22. *&c.* that nothing can be more. The force of ſo many places where this is expreſly aſſerted cannot be withſtood, and yet notwithſtanding this, we find ſuch a diſmal train and ſeries of the moſt terrible and dreadful Plagues, following one upon the Neck of the other, till at laſt both he and all his Hoſt, after the deſtruction of the *Firſt-born* in every Houſe, were drowned, and finally deſtroyed in the *Red-Sea*; that if he had been guilty of a voluntary and willful defiance of God and his ſervant *Moſes*, and of an obſtinate and ſtubborn perſeverance in ſo great a Sin, it had been impoſſible to plague him or his people more ſeverely for it.

For the more clear and evident ſolution of which difficulty, wee muſt look a little backward into the Hiſtory of thoſe times. We know very well what

what Power and Authority *Joſeph* had in *Egypt*, and how he came by it; we know likewiſe that for his ſake, his Father and Brethren, together with their Wives, Children, and Families, had the moſt fruitful, and fertile Province of all *Egypt*, the Land of *Goſhen*, aſſigned them for their Habitation, where under the Favour and Protection of the *Egyptian* King, then Reigning, they enjoyed all manner of Peace, Proſperity and Plenty, and Grew, and Multiplyed exceedingly, as well in Men as ſubſtance; in ſo much, that ſome time after, in the Reign of an other King, who had no knowledge of *Joſeph*, nor of the great Obligations by him conferred on the Land and Inhabitants of *Egypt*; and therefore probably was not the very next King to that other in whoſe time *Joſeph* flouriſhed and ruled over *Egypt*, they were grown ſo formidable by their Numbers and Riches, that *Pharaoh* ſaid unto his People, *Behold the people of the Children of Iſrael are more and mightier than we, come on, let us deal wiſely with them, leſt they Multiply, and it come to paſs, that when there falls out any War, they joyne alſo*

unto our Enemies, and fight againſt us, and ſo get them up out of the Land. Exod. 1. *v.* 9, 10. And from this time forward, they uſed all imaginable means to oppreſs them. *Therefore they did ſet over them hard task-Maſters to afflict them with their Burthens. v.* 11. *and they made their lives bitter with hard Bondage, in Morter and Brick, and in all manner of Service in the Field; all their Service wherewith they made them ſerve was with Rigour. v.* 14. Nay, to that extremity did the Tyranny of this wicked King proceed, that he put out a moſt Barbarous and Bloody Edict, Commanding all the Midwives to make away all the Male Children of the *Hebrew-Race*, as they came into the World: Which if it had been executed with like Cruelty, to that by which it was Commanded, the whole ſtock and race of the *Jews* muſt inevitably have Periſhed: but it is ſaid, *that the Midwives feared God, and did not as the King Commanded them, but ſaved the Men Children alive, v.* 17. And with what Cruelty the *Egyptian* Taskmaſters uſed the *Iſraelites*, may be ſeen in part from the imperious and ſevere behaviour

haviour of one of them, *c.* 2. *v.* 11. Which affront and indignity put upon his Countryman and Friend, *Moſes* was ſo little able to brook, that, imagining himſelf to be ſecure from all danger of diſcovery, *When he had looked this way, and that way, and when he ſaw there was no man, he ſlew the* Egyptian, *and hid him in the Sand. v.* 12. For which Fact of his, being notwithſtanding after all his caution diſcovered, he was forced to fly *from the face of* Pharaoh, *and dwell in the land of* Midian. *v.* 15. During which time it ſo fell out, that *Pharaoh* the then King of *Egypt* died, *v.* 23. *And it came to paſs in proceſs of time, that the King of* Egypt *died.* And that this time happened during the continuance of *Moſes* in the land of *Midian*, is plain from. *c.* 4. *v.* 19. *And the Lord ſaid unto* Moſes *in* Midian, *go return into* Egypt, *for all the men are dead which ſought thy life.* But *Pharaoh* himſelf was one of thoſe men, and indeed the chief of them all, and whom he had moſt reaſon to be afraid of, *c.* 2. *v.* 15. *Now when* Pharaoh *heard this thing, he ſought to ſlay* Moſes. Therefore it is plain, that he

was dead alſo, and that therefore thoſe words, *v.* 23. (*And it came to paſs in proceſs of time, that the King of* Egypt *died*) muſt be underſtood of ſome part of that interval, which happened during the Habitation and abode of *Moſes* in the land of *Midian.*

We have no plain and diſtinct account of this Kings Succeſſor, but it is plain that here he ended his Life, and here another Reign began, being ſo far from being more favorable to the *Iſraelites* than the former, that it was rather more harſh and ſevere; therefore we hear of new Complaints, and immediately after the relation of the former Kings Death, *v.* 23. in the words above cited, it is added, *And the Children of* Iſrael *ſighed by reaſon of the bondage, and they Cried, and their Cry came up unto* God, *by reaſon of their bondage*, and *v.* 24. *God heard their groaning, and God remembred his Covenant with* Abraham, *with* Iſaac, *and with* Jacob. And it was upon this ſcore, becauſe God knew ſo well as he did the perverſneſs and wicked obſtinacy of this cruel Prince's inclinations, though he were left to himſelf, who

together

together with his Anceſtours had all along jealouſie that the *Iſraelites* deſigned to get them up out of the Land, *c.* 1. *v.* 10. and were moſt firmly reſolved not to ſuffer it. I ſay it was upon this ſcore, as well as that God had purpoſed and deſigned to harden his heart, and to make that obſtinate and ſtiff Temper of his, ſtill more obdurate, and unrelenting than it was before, that he ſaid, *c.* 8. *v.* 19. *I am ſure that the King of* Egypt *will not let you go, no not by a mighty hand.*

So then, having laid down this plain and true State of the Condition of thoſe times, it will now be no hard matter, to give a plain and ſolid reſolution to this Queſtion, Why God hardened the heart of *Pharaoh*, ſo that it doth not ſeem to have been in his Power to ſuffer the People to depart, and yet puniſhed him, and his whole Nation with that ſeverity, that if this obſtinacy of his had been as Voluntary, as it ſeems to have been forced and perfectly Conſtrained, he could not have ſuffered more heavy Puniſhments and Calamities for it? The caſe in ſhort is this; he and his Predeceſſors, as it

ſhould ſeem, for at leaſt two or three Succeſſions before him, had been guilty of that ſtrange Cruelty, Barbarity and Oppreſſion, in ſtudying and contriving ways how to vex and torment this miſerable People, (which yet were the people whom God had choſen out of all the Nations of the Earth, to be a choſen and peculiar Seed, among whom he had determined to place his Holy name, and in the midſt of whom he had reſolved to dwell) and in Executing thoſe their Barbarous and Horrid Deſigns, with ſo much ſeverity, and inhumane Rigour, that the cry of their Tyranny, Injuſtice, and oppreſſion mixt with the Groans, and Tears of a poor miſerable, and enſlaved Nation, called ſo loud for Vengeance at the hand of God; that the time was now come, wherein the Divine patience and forbearance ſeemed no longer able to ſtruggle with a wicked and perverſe Generation.

Therefore we muſt look upon this hardening of *Pharaoh*'s heart, together with thoſe Plagues and Puniſhments, that were conſequent upon it, not under the notion the one of a ſin, the other

ther of a Judgment inflicted upon him or his people for that Sin, but they are ſo many ſeveral and diſtinct Puniſhments, of that Voluntary and willful Cruelty, and Injuſtice, of which he had been formerly guilty: he did not ſend thoſe Plagues and Calamities, upon him and his people, becauſe he had hardened his heart, for this were to puniſh where there was no Offence, but he both hardened his heart, and ſhowred down thoſe terrible and diſmal Judgments, for the ſake of thoſe great and crying Sins, of Cruelty and wrongful Oppreſſion, and upon account of his ſetting himſelf, as it were in an open defiance, and in a direct oppoſition to the Divine Will and Decree, by endeavouring to extirpate and root out that very people from off the face of the Earth, which yet God had ſworn to *Abraham*, that he *would multiply as the Stars of Heaven, and make them as the Sands of the Sea ſhore for number.* It being juſt with God to puniſh Neglect with Stupidity, and willful Obſtinacy with fatal Obduration, as our *Saviour* ſerved the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* who had rejected, ſlighted, and

and ſet at nought his wholeſome Advice and Doctrine, when he ſpake to them in a more Intelligible manner, by addreſſing himſelf to them in Parables and Symbols, *Mark*, *c.* 4. 12. *That ſeeing they might ſee, and not perceive, and hearing they might hear, and not underſtand, leſt at any time they ſhould be converted, and their Sins ſhould be forgiven them.*

Not that God can with juſtice Condemn a man to everlaſting Torments, merely becauſe he did not, or could not underſtand his Duty, but when the opportunities of Mercy have been given, and the offers of Grace have been ſufficiently made, when they had a time formerly which they might have improved to their own advantage, and when it depended wholly upon themſelves whether they would underſtand or do their Duty or no, which time they have careleſly let ſlip, and have beſides ſcornfully rejected thoſe good Adviſes that have been given, or willfully overlooked that manifeſt Violence, Wrong, and Injuſtice, which did ſo plainly betray it ſelf to every Eye, that they could not chuſe but diſcern it themſelves,

themſelves, and yet have perſiſted after all this in the ſame abominable and wicked Practiſes, then it is juſt with God to puniſh men with *hardneſs of Heart*, and *blindneſs of Eyes*, for which they are not, neither muſt they be ſuppoſed to be afterwards *Damned*, or *Deſtroyed*, but both of theſe are two *ſeveral* and *diſtinct* Puniſhments inflicted upon them for the ſake of the firſt Offence.

It is therefore obſervable in the ninth Chapter to the *Romans*, where this caſe of *Pharaoh* is among other inſtances made uſe of by the *Apoſtle*, and where St. *Paul* introduces an Objection complaining of the injuſtice of *Pharaoh*'s puniſhment, who ſeemed to have been puniſhed for what he could not avoid, *v.* 17. *Thou wilt ſay then unto me, why doth he yet find fault? For who hath reſiſted his will?* St. *Paul*'s anſwer to this Objection is twofold. Firſt, he reſolves this ſevere dealing with *Pharaoh*, and his people, into the *Soveraginty* and *abſolute Dominion* of *God* over his *Creatures*, by which he might juſtly have done as much as this came to, that is no more than

than the bare *taking away* of their *Lives*, though they had not offended him at all. *v.* 20. *Nay but, O man, who art thou that replyeſt againſt God, ſhall the thing formed, ſay to him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power over the Clay, of the ſame Lump, to make one Veſſel unto Honour, and another unto Diſhonour?* That is, *the Potter* by virtue of that *abſolute* and *arbitrary* Power, which he hath to diſpoſe of the *Clay* as ſhall ſeem beſt to himſelf, may out of the ſame *Lump* make *one Veſſel* for *Sacred* and *Holy*, *another* for *Prophane*, or *ſervile* Uſes, *one* for more *Clean* and *Honourable*, *another* for more *Contemptible* and *vile* Employments, *one* more *Beautiful* and *proportionably Graceful*, *another* more *Ugly* and *Miſſhapen*, *one* more *Weak*, *another* more *ſtrong* and *Laſting*; *one*, upon *one* or *more* of the *firſt* accounts, deſerving to be more *Charily kept*, and *Cautiouſly preſerved*; *another* upon *one* or *all* of the *latter* reaſons, fit for nothing, but to be *broken* and *trodden under foot* of Men: He may juſtly take away all that *Shape*, or *Beauty*, or *Proportion*, or *Strength*,

Strength, or *Uſe*, which he hath given it, and ſo God may do with his *Creatures*: He may *deprive* them without any *Injuſtice* of *all* that he hath *given* them, let it be what it will.

But if we ſhould ſuppoſe this *Potter*, when he hath made this *Veſſel*, to be able to *animate* it with a *living* Soul, capable of enjoying or being uneaſie to it ſelf, then, I doubt, he could not without *manifeſt Injuſtice*, before any *offence* Committed, put his *Veſſel* into ſuch a Condition, as ſhould make it *eternally* ſenſible of the moſt *exquiſite Pain* and *Torment*: From whence it will be eaſie to judge, how favorable this ſimilitude is to the black Non-ſence of *abſolute* and *irreſpective* Reprobation, or which is all one, how far *God*'s *power*, with reſpect to his *Creatures*, which are the *object* of it, may *lawfully* be extended: Since the enquiry is not *who* and *who* are together, but what is in it ſelf *juſt*, and what is *unlawful*; it being neceſſary, upon ſuppoſition that juſtice is a *real* and *immutable* thing, (and if it be not, then any thing may be any thing as the *Tide* ſerves, and as the moſt *powerful will* ſhall

ſhall determine) that there ſhould be ſome *general* and *unalterable* notion belonging to it, preſcinded from *particular Perſons* and *Caſes*.

And this is his firſt anſwer, taken from the *abſolute Power* and *Dominion* of God: his ſecond is taken from the Conſideration of his *Juſtice* in the Government of humane Affairs, *v.* 22. *What if God, willing to ſhew his Wrath, and to make his Power known, endured with much long ſuffering the Veſſels of wrath fitted for Deſtruction*, that is, that though it be very true, that God did afterwards by a particular Judgment harden the heart of the *Egyptian* King, ſo that it ſeemed after this, in a manner *fatal* to him, to do as he did, to be deaf to the Voice of *God*, and the Miracles of *Moſes*, and to thoſe Plagues and Calamities with which they were attended, yet he did not do this, till after much *Long-ſuffering* and *Patience*; now all *Suffering* or *Patience* ſuppoſeth a *Fault*, all *Long-ſuffering* a *Continuance* and *obſtinate Perſeverance* of the Perſon born with, in the commiſſion of *one* or *more* Sins, and every thing which is *properly* a fault or Sin, ſuppoſeth

ſeth a Power of *Choice* or *Freedom* in in him that committeth it, it ſuppoſeth likewiſe a *knowledg* of the *pravity* and *foul nature* of the crime committed, or at leaſt a *poſſibility* of coming to the *knowledg* of it; for *invincible Ignorance* needeth no *excuſe*, and *Neceſſity* deſtroys the *nature* of *Sin*, and of *Religion* too.

It is therefore true indeed, that God did *harden* the heart of *Pharaoh*, and that from this *hardneſs*, which could not be diſtinguiſhed, by any *ſenſible* Effect, from a *voluntary* and *willful* Stubborneſs of his own, he was pleaſed to take *occaſion* to viſit him and his people with many and great Plagues; but yet it is every whit as true, that he did not do this, till after many *willful* and *hainous Provocations*, by which he had made himſelf a *Veſſel of wrath*, and *fitted* himſelf and his people *for Deſtruction*. And therefore in ſuch a Caſe, it was no marvel if he ſhould be willing to *ſhew his Wrath, and to make his Power known*; that is, to give ſo great an inſtance of the exerciſe of his *Juſtice*, and of his *Soveraignty*, together, as he did in all thoſe Plagues which were inflicted

flicted upon the *Egyptians*, which Calamities lighting in Common upon them all, though all were not *equally* Guilty of that Tyranny and oppreſſion for which they were ſent, were with reſpect to *ſome* an effect of the Divine *Juſtice*, and to *others* a *proper Exerciſe* of his *Dominion*, and in all of them more or leſs an Evidence of *both*, in as much as no man is *perfectly* Innocent, and every ſuch extraordinary Calamity, as thoſe inflicted upon the *Egyptians* were, is a *plain* and *undoubted* Indication of that *Omnipotent* arme, by which it is inflicted. The Concurrence of both theſe Cauſes is likewiſe plainly intimated; *v.* 17. which is a Citation out of *Exod.* 9. 16. *For the Scripture ſaith unto* Pharaoh, *even for this Cauſe have I raiſed thee up, that I might ſhew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the Earth.* Where by *raiſing up*, three things may be meant.

Firſt, The raiſing or Creating out of nothing, for this Cauſe have I raiſed you, and all the firſt born of the Land, and all thoſe who ſhall in the Concluſion be deſtroyed together with

with you in the red Sea, that I may Plague, Torment, and conſume you, and by this means give a ſignal and mighty inſtance, of my Dominion and Soveraignty over men, and of my Ability and power to exerciſe and diſplay them by terrible Effects, as oft as it ſhall ſeem good in my ſight: not that I care to make an idle boaſt, and vain oſtentation of my power, without any purpoſe or deſign at all, a thing as inconſiſtent with the perfection of my Nature, which cannot reap any advantage from any thing without it ſelf, as it is uſeleſs and of no avail to my Creatures; but that my name may be declared throughout all the Earth, that is, that mankind which is now ſo deeply plunged and immerſt in the moſt ſottiſh Idolatry and Superſtition, being fallen into a dead ſleep of Ignorance and Errour, may by ſo terrible a Demonſtration of my power as this is, be awakened into a due knowledge of me and of it's ſelf: Of me, who am alone able to bring to paſs ſuch marvellous and dreadful things; and of themſelves, who can only be ſafe under the ſhadow of my

wings, but in vain fly for refuge to thoſe poor deſpicable and helpleſs Deities, their idols of ſilver and gold the work of mens hands, things that have Mouths, and Eyes, and Ears, but can neither ſpeak, nor ſee, nor hear; ſtupid, contemptible, ſenſleſs Creatures, partly of my making, and partly of their own.

Secondly, By raiſing up may be meant, for this cauſe I have raiſed thee up to be King over *Egypt*, that I might make thee the more publick, and notorious example for thoſe many and great Sins, willfully and obſtinately committed by thee; when in a more private and leſs regarded capacity, and which if they had been puniſhed at that time, thy puniſhment would not have been ſo exemplary, and of ſuch publick advantage to the world, as now it is like to prove.

Laſtly, For this cauſe have I raiſed thee up, that is, for this cauſe have I hardened thy heart, and puffed up thy haughty mind, into a reſolution of perſiſting in the ſame courſes, that brought this Judgment upon thee, that by this means I might make thee the greater

greater and the more terrible example as of Sin, ſo alſo of Puniſhment in the eye of the World, which is my uſual way of dealing with wicked and unreclaimable men.

Tolluntur in altum
Ut lapſu graviore ruant——

Εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἐξήγειρά σε: As if the Copies from whence our *Apoſtle* borrows this Citation had read it in the *Hebrew*, *bahabur hazoth hakimotheka*, for this cauſe I have exalted or puffed thee up, in the preſent *Hebrew* Bibles it is *behemadtika*, I have made thee to ſtand, 70. ἕνεκεν τούτου διετηρήθης for this cauſe haſt thou been preſerved thus long, though thy Sins deſerved a much earlier Puniſhment, that thou mighteſt fall at laſt, a more remarkable inſtance of the divine Vengeance and Diſpleaſure, which turns to the ſame account with the former reading. The ſame thing is likewiſe no leſs evident from the verſe immediately following, being, *v.* 18. *Therefore hath he Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and whom he will, he hardeneth.* It is

an Act of the divine Goodneſs, it is an Act of his Juſtice, to preſerve the Good and Virtuous, and to uphold and proſper them in all their ways, but it is no act of Mercy; for all Mercy ſuppoſeth a remiſſion of Puniſhment, and all Puniſhment hath a neceſſary relation to guilt, which guilt is the conſequence and effect of Sin, ſo that the ſenſe of the place muſt unavoidably be this, that of thoſe who have affronted the Majeſty, and provoked the goodneſs of God, by many great and willfully committed Sins, it is all his pleaſure whether he will diſplay the terrible effects of his Juſtice, or whether he will remit of that right of Puniſhment which their Sins have given him, and extend his Mercy towards them all, giving them all a farther day of Grace, and further opportunities of Repentance, and ſince he may do either of theſe to all, it is manifeſt he may, if he pleaſes, make a difference between them, he may extend his Mercy to ſome out of an *arbitrary* Goodneſs, according to the *free* Determinations of the *freeſt* mind, undirected

and

and unbiaſſed by any *external* cauſe or motive whatſoever; and ſince all have deſerved Puniſhment, what he might have inflicted upon all, he may inflict upon ſome, and either he hath no right to pardon and forgive any, or that very right and Prerogative of pardoning one part, ſuppoſeth a juſt and lawful power of puniſhing the reſt: For puniſhment and pardon muſt always be in the ſame hand, and they have both of them relation to the ſame ſort of Object, none ever needing the benefit of a pardon, but he that before hath deſerved to be puniſhed. So then *he will have Mercy, on whom he will have Mercy, and whom he will he hardneth.* That is, on ſome he will beſtow further opportunities of returning to themſelves and him, he will allow them the full exerciſe and free uſe of their reaſon, to make a right diſtinction betwixt good and bad, and to reflect with that ſerioufneſs upon their former wickedneſs that will, if they purſue ſuch reflections as far as they will lead them, be naturally productive of amendment; nay, perhaps with ſome he will go

farther then this, he will infuſe the grace of Repentance into their hearts, and will afford them the kind encouragements, and influences of his holy Spirit, to bring them to a more healthful frame and conſtitution of mind. But with others he will deal after a quite contrary manner, he will harden their hearts, and will improve that lethargick diſeaſe which is already ſtealing upon their minds into a downright inſenſibility, he will add blindneſs to blindneſs, and obſtinacy to Sin, till he hath made them ripe for Puniſhment, and fully prepared and fitted for Deſtruction, which is ſo far from being any way unjuſt, that it ſeems abſolutely neceſſary in order to the due adminiſtration of the divine juſtice in the Government of the world.

God hardens the hearts of ſinful men, on purpoſe that they may not repent and turn from their evil courſes and be ſaved, and if he ſhould not do this ſometimes, the vileſt and moſt abominable varlets upon God's earth, would frequently ſcape unpuniſhed, to the diminution of his Juſtice, and the

the diſcouragement of a conſtant and uninterrupted courſe of Virtue, which if it were not for this, might ſeem in a manner needleſs: For not to ſpeak of a Deathbed repentance, which will not ſo eaſily be conſidered, by the Divine goodneſs; an habitual courſe of Repentance in whomſoever it be found, is naturally productive of the grace and favour of God, there being an immediate and intimate Congruity, betwixt the goodneſs of God, and the repentance of a Sinner: Beſides that a through Repentance, an hearty and inward ſorrow and contrition for Sin, attended with an outward and viſible reformation of life and manners, works ſuch a perfect change and alteration through the whole man, that he is ſcarce the ſame perſon that he was before, and it doth not ſeem reaſonable, that the Penitent, the Good, virtuous and honeſt man ſhould be puniſhed for thoſe faults which none but the worſt of Sinners did commit.

I do not ſay that thoſe Sins which we have formerly committed, can

ever be committed again, that is impoſſible and beyond the reach even of omnipotence it ſelf, neither do I affirm that Repentance can ever remove the guilt, though it may the puniſhment of Sin, but I ſay, there is a very great, perhaps a neceſſary and unalterable congruity betwixt an hearty and habitual Repentance, and the mercy of God, and it is a ſign there is ſo, when he hath been at the price of the blood of his dear Son, to make up what was wanting in the defects of our Repentance, and of that imperfect obedience which is conſequent upon it: Therefore if he will not give Encouragement to Sin, if he will not looſen the reines of Government too far, nor ſuffer the diſcipline of Virtue to be Corrupted, it is neceſſary ſometimes, that he ſhould harden thoſe for the future, in order to their Puniſhment, whom a long ſeries of mercy and forbearance hath not been able to reclaim. Eſpecially conſidering that this hardneſs whether it proceed from a contracted Obſtinacy of the ſinner himſelf, or from the juſt Judgment of

God

God, it is *ad extra* with reſpect to all other people the ſame, and his puniſhment will have all the effects of an example, becauſe the divine Judgments cannot be diſcerned by the eys of men, and he will ſeem all the while to have acted as from himſelf, and conſequently to have been deſervedly puniſhed for having done ſo, and ſo it will affright other men from doing that by choice which he by a kind of fate and neceſſity was compelled to do.

Neither in all this hardning is there any thing, for which a ſinner can juſtly expoſtulate with God, as having ſuffered any wrong, it being a thing perfectly of his own chuſing. For as Repentance is the natural and neceſſary conſequence of all ſin, ſo long as the mind continues tender, and preſerves a due ſenſe of it ſelf, and of the congruity and harmony which there is betwixt all reaſonable Actions, and a reaſonable underſtanding Nature, the voluntary breaking of which congruity, is the cauſe, and the pain conſequent upon that breach the nature of Repentance, and yet this

this very paſſion, is notwithſtanding ſometimes infuſed by a ſupernatural way to give us the deeper ſight and ſenſe of our Sins, and provoke us the more effectually to a through Reformation, and is likewiſe made a neceſſary condition of Salvation, and happineſs in the world to come. So alſo the natural and neceſſary conſequence of a long and obſtinate courſe of Sin, is the weakning and at length utterly extinguiſhing all the good principles of the heavenly light and Life, it impairs by inſenſible degrees the diſcriminative Powers of our minds, by which we are to diſtinguiſh betwixt the moral good or evil of things, and overthrows the Empire of reaſon by a barbarous incurſion of *Gothick* unciviliz'd, and brutiſh paſſions; and if this brawny hardneſs, this benummed inſenſibility of Spirit, be a thing, as it always is, beginning from our ſelves, and brought by a long continuance in vitious practiſes, to a chronical ſtupidity or habitual deadneſs of the Soul, we are not then to blame almighty God if he make that our puniſhment, which we have made

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our choice, as the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs were ſurfeited with quails; or if from a Diſeaſe ſcarce Curable of our own Contracting, he improve it to a fate beyond all hopes of Repentance, and excluding all poſſibility of Salvation.

Neither is there any thing more hard in all this, than in taking away Sinners by untimely Deaths, before they have made their peace with God, or ſufficiently prepared themſelves for the Enjoyment of future Happineſs, by a ſincere habitual and regular Repentance, or perhaps by any at all, only in this Caſe the Sinner goes off *Incognito* without much notice or Obſervation, in the other he is commonly reſerved for ſome ſignal and remarkable Judgment in this life, which is every whit the ſame thing, with reſpect to the goodneſs or Juſtice of God as to him, it being all one whether he be now ſnatched away, or kept longer on this ſide Hell, and the Grave, reſerved for a publick ſpectacle and warning peice to the World, without all power or ability of being better then he is, only by this

this latter way he is made as uſeful to others, as he hath been Deſtructive and pernicious to himſelf, and as ſubſervient to the gracious deſigns of God's Providence, as he was Rebellious againſt his moſt Wiſe, Juſt, Righteous, and reaſonable Laws.

I do not ſay that this ſame fatal Blindneſs, or ſenſeleſs obſtinacy in brutiſh or unreaſonable Courſes is infuſed by God into the minds of men, by a *proper immediate* and *direct* Cauſality, this cannot be, for, *Nihil dat quod non habet*, he who is all Purity, and all Wiſdom, cannot be the *true* and *proper* cauſe of any thing unreaſonable or unclean; he that is all Energy, Activity, and Life, cannot be the cauſe of Dulneſs, Inſenſibility and Dotage; ſo as for example, though he be the Efficient, and eminently productive cauſe of the matter, of which the ſenſible Creation is Compoſed, that is, to ſay of all that is *real* and *poſitive* in it, yet of it's want of Life and motion he is not, becauſe theſe being only defects, not real things, they need no other cauſe than only the want of any cauſe at all to be

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what they are, if indeed they may be ſaid at all to be. And ſo it is with this Hardneſs or Stupidity of which we are ſpeaking, it is not properly the effect of a Cauſe, but the defect ariſing from the want, or from the ſubtraction of the Cauſe; it comes to paſs partly by an inſenſible decay of the intellectual powers of the Soul, by our own neglect and want of due care to keep them in their true plight and Vigour, and partly from God's withdrawing the gracious Aſſiſtances of his holy Spirit, which he is not obliged to vouchſafe any longer to thoſe that have ſlighted, quenched and affronted them already: and laſtly ſometimes no doubt from his taking away from us, even thoſe ordinary aſſiſtances of reaſon, which are the common guides and Directors of humane Life, from his putting out the Candle of the Lord, which as a ſacred Veſtal fire, was ſet up and kindled in our Souls, to give us at once a ſight, and enflame us with a love of virtue.

Of which ſort of proceeding with deſperate and obſtinately wicked men, the

the ſtory of *Nebuchadnezzer* in the book of *Daniel* is a notable and plain example, for it is ſaid of him. *c.* 4. *v.* 34. that *his underſtanding*, and *v.* 36. that *his reaſon returned to him*, by which it is manifeſt that he had ſome way or other been deprived of them before, otherwiſe they could not be ſaid to have returned.

And that it was by a particular Judgment, is every whit as plain as the other, both in that it was a fulfilling of his dream before related, and from the advice which *Daniel* gives him, for the averting of it, *v.* 27. *Wherefore, O King, let my Counſel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy Sins by Righteouſneſs, and thine Iniquities by ſhewing mercy to the poor.* Though it ſeems his Sins were of that hainous nature, and the divine decree was ſo abſolute and peremptory againſt him, that it was impoſſible wholly to remove it, therefore it is ſaid immediately, *if it may be a lengthning of thy tranquillity*: from whence the *Jewiſh Expoſitors*, with whom St. *Jerom* agrees, are of opinion, that he did ſo far comply with this good advice

vice of the Prophet as to obtain a ſuſpenſion of his doom for the ſpace of twelve Months becauſe it is ſaid *v.* 29, 30. *At the end of twelve Months he walked in the Palace of the Kingdom of* Babylon. *The King ſpake and ſaid is not this great* Babylon, *that I have built for the Houſe of the Kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majeſty?* and then *v.* 31. *While the word was in the Kings mouth, there fell a voice from Heaven ſaying, O King* Nebuchadnezzar, *to thee it is ſpoken the Kingdom is departed from thee.* There were *ſome* indeed in old time, who did (as St. *Jerom* upon the place acquaints us) turn all this Hiſtory into an *Allegory*, but would by no means allow it to be *literally* true, which if it be once granted, then the uſe I have made of it will come to nothing: but this conceit of thoſe *antient Interpreters*, is with great Judgment rejected by St. *Jerom*, for this excellent Reaſon, that ſuch Interpretations of Scripture without *abſolute Neceſſity* are not to be allowed. *Ne omnia quæ legimus umbra videantur & fabulæ*, and again, *Quæramus ab his qui*

qui in hac visione non recipiunt Historiam, quis iste sit Nabuchodonasor, qui somnium viderit, & quis Daniel qui somnium ejus ediſſerat, & ventura prædicat, & quomodo hic ipſe Daniel qui utique juxta eos ſancta intelligenda eſt fortitudo, a Nabuchodonoſor Princeps ariolarum ejus conſtituitur & collega appellatur. i e leaſt the whole Scripture ſhould come by this means to be turned into an Allegory or Fable. And again, *Quæramus &c. i e.* I demand of thoſe who will not allow this Viſion to be literally true, what will they make of that *Nebuchadnezzar* by whom it was ſeen? And what of *Daniel* by whom it was Interpreted, and the future events preſignified by it diſcovered? And how comes it to paſs that this *Daniel* who according to theſe Allegoricall Interpreters was nothing elſe but the divine Power, *as* Nebuchadnezzar *on the contrary was by them expounded of the infernal politie of the Devil and Angels*, How comes it about that he was made Maſter of the Magicians by *Nebuchadnezzar*? Or what muſt we underſtand by his being *Maſter of the Magicians*? Or of his being

being ſaid to have been their *Collegue* or *Fellow.*

All which is very well and very Judiciouſly obſerved by St. *Jerom*, who yet to avoid the inconvenience of ſuch *Allegoricall* Interpretations, ſeems to me to ſtick too cloſely to the *literal* Senſe, there being ſome regard, though the matters related be never ſo real, to be had to the *prophetical* Stile and way of expreſſing them: but it would be a digreſſion to enlarge ſo much as I might do upon this matter, therefore inſtead of that, I will paſs on to obſerve, that the reaſons of God's dealing in this manner with *Nebuchadnezzar*, are exactly the ſame with thoſe which St. *Paul* urges to Juſtifie the divine proceedure with relation to *Pharaoh* the King of *Egypt.*

Being reſolved either into the *Soveraignty* of *God* over his *Creatures*, by virtue of which he may without *injury deprive them*, of all that he hath *given them*, let it be what it will, whether Strength, Riches, Reaſon, Power, Honour, nay, and life it ſelf; or into that ſimilar and uniform *Juſtice* by which this lower World,

but more especially the affaires of *mankind*, are by the eternal measures of the divine Wisdome administred and governed. The first of these Reasons is assigned, *v.* 34, 35. of that Chapter. *And at the end of days, I* Nebuchadnezzar *lift up mine Eyes unto Heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him, that liveth for ever, whose Dominion is an everlasting Dominion, and his Kingdom is from Generation to Generation, and all the Inhabitants of the Earth are reputed as nothing, and he doth according to his will in the Army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him what dost thou?* The Second, *v.* 37. *Now I* Nebuchadnezzar *praise, and extol, and honour the King of Heaven, all whose works are truth, and his Ways Judgment, and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.*

Neither are these two instances of *Pharaoh* and of *Nebuchadnezzar* to be looked upon as *single* or *extraordinary Phænomena* of divine Providence, from whence no inference can be made, as

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to the *common* meaſures by which God proceeds in his dealings with the Sons of men: for Firſt, whatever God may do without doing Violence to that ſacred attribute of Juſtice, that he may very well be ſuppoſed to do as oft as there is a juſt occaſion; and Secondly, there are in Scripture examples of alike nature, which are of much greater Latitude and Comprehenſion than theſe, being ſo far from being confined to a particular perſon that they are extended as far as the whole race and ſtock of mankind.

This was juſt the Caſe at the confuſion of *Babell*, *Go to, ſaid God, let us go down and there confound their Language, that they may not underſtand one anothers ſpeech*: He did not firſt make them forget that Language which they ſpake before, and then ſubſtitute another, and a different Language in every man's mind, in its ſtead, for this were to work a thouſand Miracles to no purpoſe, when one would ſerve the turn, which without better proof than can be brought for it, is not reaſonable to ſuppoſe; but he *confounded* their Language,

that is, he took away their Memories and obliterated that distinct apprehension of names and things, which is necessary in ordinary Conversation to one man's right understanding of an other; so that they *confounded* the signification of words, and forgetting their wonted meaning, understood them so,as if they had been taken in some other sense, than what they usually were wont to be, so as one of these mighty Builders employed in that great design of bidding defiance to the powers of Heaven, and securing themselves for the future against the will or justice of the Almighty, calling to his partner and confederate for straw, did it by the same words by which he used formerly to call for bricks, which his fellow very wisely Interpreted of morter; another he wanted a Trowel, but called indeed for a Pickax and was understood of a Spade, by which miraculous disagreement amongst themselves, it came to pass that the work could not proceed, but they were forced to disperse, and every man thinking himself abused and affronted by his

Fellow,

Fellow, they were compelled to ſeparate, and it is probable they did not part without Blows, till at laſt every man went away by himſelf, or at leaſt in very ſmall Companies, curſing their Misfortune, and complaining of their Fellows, and ſtragling about they knew not whither themſelves.

Again, *Deut.* 28. 15. We have theſe words. *It ſhall come to paſs if thou will not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to obſerve to do all his Commandments, and his Statutes, which I command thee this day, that all theſe Curſes ſhall come upon thee, and overtake thee,* among which Curſes one is this, *v.* 28, 29. *The Lord ſhall ſmite thee with Madneſs, and Blindneſs, and Aſtoniſhment of heart, and thou ſhal't grope at Noon-dayes, as the Blind gropeth in Darkneſs, and thou ſhal't not proſper in thy ways, and thou ſhal't be oppreſſed and ſpoiled ever more and more.*

To the ſame Cauſe muſt we refer all thoſe *divine* or *panick* Terrours, infuſed into the minds of men by a ſupernatural way, and by the immedi-

ate Judgment of God, when as there was no real or humane cauſe of Fear, by which men have been ſo miſerably Confounded, as to forget where or among whom they were, to miſtake their Friends for their Enemies, and by which whole Armies have periſhed by an inteſtine Slaughter, thinking all the while they were engaged in Battel with their Enemies. Such an Accident as this we read of in the Camp of the *Philiſtins*. 1. *Sam.* 6. 14, 15. Where *Jonathan* and his *Armour-Bearer*, going over by themſelves with a miraculous Confidence and aſſurance of Succeſs, to attack a Garriſon of the *Philiſtins*, it is ſaid, *there was a trembling in the Hoſt in the Field and among all the people, the Garriſons and the Spoilers they alſo trembled and the Earth quaked For it was a very great trembling.* And again, *v.* 20. *When* Saul *and all the people that were with him, aſſembled themſelves and came to the Battel*, (all which people were but ſix hundred, *v.* 2.) it is ſaid, *behold every mans Sword was againſt his Fellow, and there was a very great Diſcomfiture.*

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The ſame was the Caſe of the *Midianites*, when *Gideon* and his Company *blew their Trumpets and brake their Pitchers*. *Judg.* 7. 22. And of the Children of *Ammon*, and *Moab*, and the Inhabitants of *Mountſeir*. 2 *Chro.* 20. 22, 23. Such a divine Terrour as this was, ſmote all thoſe people who were Conquered by the *Iſraelites*, at their entrance into the Land of *Canaan*; and this is the meaning of that phraſe, ſo often uſed of God's *delivering* ſuch or ſuch *a people into the hand of their Enemies*, that is, by a particular Judgment he takes down their Spirits, makes their hearts melt away within them, or he divides them among themſelves, as in the inſtances above mentioned. So God promiſes the *Iſraelites*, *If they keep his Statutes, and walk in his Commandments to do them*, in the 28*th.* of *Lev. That they ſhall chaſe their Enemies, and they ſhall fall before them by the Sword, that five of them ſhall chaſe an Hundred, and an hundred ſhall put ten Thouſand to flight.* And as their Enemies, the Idolatrous and backſliding Nations, Nations that knew not God, and kept

not his Commandments, were to be ſurrounded with Terrour, and encompaſſed on all ſides with Aſtoniſhment and Fear, ſo on the contrary they on the otherſide, while they continued firm in their Obedience to the Laws of God, were to be no leſs miraculouſly aſſiſted with a Spirit of Peace, Tranquility, Confidence, and Aſſurance. *Levit.* 27. *v.* 5. 6. *Ye ſhall eat your Bread to the full, and dwell in your Land ſafely, and I will give Peace in the Land, and ye ſhall lie down and none ſhall make you afraid.* Pſal. 3. *v.* 4, 5, 6. *I Cried unto the Lord ſaith* David, *with my Voice and he heard me out of his holy Hill, I laid me down and ſlept, I awaked for the Lord ſuſtained me. I will not be affraid of ten Thouſands of people, that have ſet themſelves againſt me round about.* And *Pſal.* 91. Still more plainly and pathetically. *He that dwelleth in the ſecret place of the moſt High, ſhall abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty, I will ſay of the Lord he is my Refuge, my Fortreſs, my God, in him will I Truſt, ſurely he ſhall deliver thee from the ſnare of the Fowler, and from the noiſom Peſtilence, he ſhall*

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cover thee with his Feathers, and under his wings ſhal't thou Truſt, his truth ſhall be thy Sheild and Buckler, thou ſhal't not be afraid for the terrour by Night, nor for the Arrow that flieth by Day, nor for the Peſtilence that walketh in Darkneſs, nor for the Deſtruction that waſteth at noon Day, and more to the ſame purpoſe, no leſs Pathetically expreſſing the miraculous Encouragements which God is pleaſed to Vouchſafe his people, while others are viſited with a *Spirit* of Fear, Aſtoniſhment, Suſpicion, and Diſtruſt.

It is likewiſe very obſervable in this matter, that in the place of *Samuel* above cited what our Interpreters have rendered a *great Trembling*, 1. *Sam.* 14. 15. *So it was a very great Trembling*, in the Original it is *Vatehi Lecherdath Elohim, and it was as the Trembling of God*, that is, the Earth ſhook, as it is there related, and the minds of men were Aſtoniſhed, and Confounded at the immediate Judgment of God, or by a ſupernatural operation of the divine Power: and this is the uſual meaning of ſuch phraſes up and down the Scriptures, of

of the old Teſtament. So 1. *Sam.* 26. 12. It is ſaid of *Saul* and his Company, *They were all aſleep, becauſe a deep ſleep from the Lord was falln upon them.* In the *Hebrew* it is, *Chi Tardemath Jehovah Naplah Halehem, becauſe the ſleep of God, or the deep ſleep of God was falln upon them,* that is, not in general a great or ſound Sleep, but ſuch a ſound ſleep as was the effect of a ſupernatural Cauſe, ſuch as was owing to an unuſual Concurrence of the divine Will and Power, or in alluſion to that ſleep into which our firſt Parent was caſt by God himſelf, while his ſide was opened, and the Companion of his Bed and Life was taking out of himſelf. So *the Mountains of God* are not great Mountains, ſimply Conſidered, but for this reaſon, becauſe God in the moſt ancient times was uſually Worſhipped upon the higheſt Mountains, as approaching nigheſt to the ſuppoſed Seat of the divine preſence in Heaven, and as affording the moſt large and ſpacious Proſpect round about, and ſo filling the minds of thoſe that came to Worſhip with a more awful and Majeſtick

notion

notion of the great Creator of Heaven and Earth; and *the Cedars of God*, that is moſt properly ſuch Cedars as grew in the Groves or high places of the ancient *Heathens*, which being Sacred and Inviolate, did for that reaſon, grow to be the talleſt and biggeſt of any other. And *the City of God*, that is, not ſo much the great City, though that it was too, as being the Metropolis of *Judea*, but the City where God was Worſhipped in a more extraordinary manner than other places, where all the Sacrifices were to be made, and all the ſolemn Feaſts to be kept and obſerved, and towards which all were to direct their Faces, the Temple of *Jeruſalem* being the peculiar Reſidence of the divine Glory, when ever they put up any Prayers or Supplications to Almighty God. Again, *Gen.* 6. 2. *The Sons of God ſaw the Daughters of men that they were fair*, in the *Hebrew* it is *bnei haelohim*, *the Sons of the Gods*, that is as *Symmachus* has rightly rendered it, with whom alſo the *Chaldee Paraphraſe* agrees οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν δυναστευόντων, becauſe there is a reſemblance of the humane

humane to the divine Power, becauſe the one derives its Authority from the other, and becauſe Magiſtrates, Judges, and Princes, are expreſly called Gods in the Language of the Scripture, which is ſtill confirmed, from what we find *v.* 4. *The Sons of God came in unto the Daughters of men and they bare Children to them, the ſame became mighty men, which were of old men of Renown. Hemmah hagib borim aſher meholam anſhei haſhem* theſe were the *Cabici*, the *Divipotes* whom after Ages worſhipped as their Gods, and paid divine Honours at their Altars and their Shrines. Laſtly, *Gen.* 30. 8. *With great Wreſtlings ſaith* Rachel, *have I wreſtled with my Siſter, and I have prevailed, and She called her Sons name Nephtali*, in the *Hebrew* it is, *Naphtoulei Elohim Niphtalti. I have wreſtled with the wreſtlings of God*, that is, She had found this expedient to ſtruggle as it were with God, who had withheld from her the fruit of her Womb, *viz.* By ſubſtituting her maid *Bilhah* to Conceive in her ſtead, according to the uſage and Cuſtom of thoſe times.

And

And thus in Congruity with, and in analogy to all theſe Interpretations, *the trembling of God* in that place of *Samuel* which I have mentioned was not ſimply any great or extraordinary Trembling, but it was ſuch an unuſual motion in the Earth, ſuch a terrour, Aſtoniſhment and diſmal Fear, ſeizing upon the minds of men, as was owing to the ſupernatural and immediate Interpoſition of the divine Power, which is yet more unqueſtionably demonſtrated from other places of the ſame Chapter, *v. 6. Jonathan ſaid to the young man that bore his Armour, come and let us go over into the Garriſon of theſe Uncircumciſed, it may be that the Lord will work for us. For there is no reſtraint to the Lord to ſave by many or by few. v. 10. If they ſay thus, come up unto us, then we will go up, for the Lord hath delivered them into our hand.* And *v. 12. Jonathan ſaid unto his Armour bearer, come after me, for the Lord hath delivered them into the hand of Iſrael.* It is plain therefore that this miraculous Terrour and Confuſion with which the Camp of the *Philiſtins* was

was overſpread, and which was in a manner the only Cauſe of that Deſtruction and Ruin which befel them, was a thing perfectly ſupernatural, and of the Lord's doing, and it is, and ought to be marvellous in our Eyes; For without this it would have been a thing Impoſſible, for two men to work ſo great terrour and Confuſion in a numerous, well Diſciplin'd and well appointed Armie; Which was likewiſe without all queſtion exactly the very Caſe of *Sampſon*, whoſe ſingle Strength and Courage how great ſoever, as it muſt be confeſſed it was miraculouſly great, yet it could never have ſlain ſuch heaps of *Philiſtins*, as fell perpetually before him whereſoever he came, he could never have done ſuch bloody Execution with ſo tame a Weapon, as he is ſaid to have uſed, but that beſides his own Strength, Activity or perſonal Valour, there was a damp and Terrour upon the hearts of all his Enemies, they fell by their own Fears, by a ſupernatural Aſtoniſhment, and by a divine Infatuation as much as by the power of *Sampſon*;

they

they were *melted away like wax before the Fire, and powred out like water ſpilt upon the Ground, which is not to be gathered up any more.*

Now it is all one when God deſigns to give an inſtance of his Power, or of his Juſtice upon a People by their Deſtruction, whether he do it by hardening their Hearts, as he did *Pharaoh*'s, by which without all ſenſe or fear of Danger, he ran with a brutiſh blindneſs into the Red-Sea, where he and all his Hoſt, his Princes, and his mighty men of Valour, his Chariots, and his Horſemen, were overthrown and utterly Deſtroyed; or whether he do ſo far ſoften and debilitate their Spirits, as to make them have a more dreadful apprehenſion of Dangers than they deſerve, which was the Caſe of thoſe *Philiſtins* whom *Sampſon* ſlew, and of all thoſe people whom the *Iſraelites* conquered when they went to take poſſeſſion of the *promiſed Land*; or whether he divide them among themſelves, and ſtir them up to the mutual Deſtruction of one another, as he did the *Midianites*, the Sons of *Moab*, and *Ammon*,

mon, the *Edomites* or Inhabitants of *Mountſeir*, and as he did theſe *Philiſtins* whom *Jonathan* and his *Armour-Bearer* aſſaulted, and whom *Saul* and his ſix hundred Partiſans, like a Commanded party or forelorn hope againſt a puiſſant Army, would have engaged, but found it needleſs, for they were all very buſie in Killing one another; or Laſtly, It is all one whether he deſtroy them by a way ſomewhat more immediate, though ſcarce more Miraculous, than any of theſe, wherein neither they nor their Enemies Contribute to their Deſtruction, but God does all himſelf, as when the Flood came down from Heaven upon the old World, when the deſtroying Angel ſlew the *Firſt-born* of *Egypt*, the Threeſcore and ten Thouſand of the People whom *David* had numbred, the Hoſt of *Sennacherib* the King of *Aſſyria*, when the Stars in their Courſes fought againſt *Siſera*, when the *Fifties* were ſlain by an immediate Fire from Heaven at the Prayer of *Elijah*, when *Ananias* and *Sapphira* were preſently ſtruck Dead at the Excommunication of St. *Peter*,

for

for neither *Peter*, nor *Elijah*, did by their own Power Contribute any thing to either of the aforeſaid Events, when *Nadab* and *Abihu* by their own ſtrange Fire were Conſumed, and when ſo many *Periſhed* in the *gainſaying* of *Corah*, when *the Earth opened and devoured* Dathan, *and ſwallowed up the Congregation of Abiram.*

For he that has *jus ad finem*, has *jus ad media* too, theſe are but ſeveral ways of bringing the ſame effect to paſs, it being all one when men are to be Deſtroyed, by what means this Deſtruction is to be wrought, for Deſtruction is ſtill the ſame by what means ſoever it be brought to paſs, and by what hand ſoever it be immediately inflicted.

What I have ſaid already may be ſufficient to perſwade any reaſonable man, that it is a no leſs uſual, then juſtifiable Courſe with God Almighty in his Government of humane Affairs, not only to give up perverſe and obſtinate Sinners to themſelves, and to the power of the *Devil*, and his *wicked Angels*, but that he doth

himſelf actually Contribute by the ſecret Operations of his Providence towards their Deſtruction. But becauſe it is the humour of ſome men, as faſt as one doubt is ſatisfied, to raiſe another, and to look upon it as a diſparagement to their Parts, what ever inward Conviction they may have, not to be able to find ſome little flaw to keep the Controverſie going, to render ſuch *Opiniaſtres* as inexcuſable as I can, I will firſt produce ſome other inſtances of the ſame Nature with theſe I have produced already, and then I will anſwer all the Arguments which are brought in defence of the contrary Opinion, or at leaſt ſo many of them, as deſerve an anſwer from a man that would not willingly abuſe his own Leiſure, or the Patience of his Readers.

Of *Sihon* King of *Heſhbon* it is ſaid, *Deut.* 2. 30. *Sihon King of Heſhbon would not let us paſs by him, for the Lord thy God hardened his Spirit, and made his heart obſtinate that he might deliver him into thy hand.*

Of *Saul*, 1. *Sam.* 16. 14. *The Spirit of the Lord departed from* Saul, *and*

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an evil Spirit from the Lord troubled him.

Of *David*, 2 *Sam.* 23. 1. *The anger of the Lord was kindled againſt* Iſrael, *and he moved* David, *againſt them to ſay, go number* Iſrael *and* Judah.

Of *Rehoboam*, 1. *Kings*, 12. 15. *Wherefore the King harkned not unto the people, for the Cauſe was from the Lord, that he might perform his ſaying, which he ſpake by* Ahijah *the* Shilonite, *unto* Jeroboam *the Son of* Nebat.

Of *Ahab*, 1 *Kings*, 22. 20. *And the Lord ſaid who ſhall perſwade* Ahab *that he may go up and fall at* Ramoth Gilead.

Of the Sons of *Eli*, 1 *Sam.* 2. 25. *They harkened not unto the Voice of their Father, becauſe the Lord would ſlay them.*

Laſtly, To return to the inſtance from whence we firſt ſet out, *Pſal.* 105. 25. It is ſaid of the other *Egyptians*, as well as of *Pharaoh* himſelf, that *God turned their hearts to hate his People, and to deal ſubtilly with his Servants.* Of this inſtance I have

already ſpoken, and ſhewed that this hardening was not the effect meerly of an Arbitrary Power, without any regard to the meaſures of Juſtice, but that it was a juſt Judgment of God, inflicted upon them in order to their Puniſhment, by reaſon of many fore paſt impieties and provocations.

Let us now ſee whether in the other inſtances, the ſame Cauſe of the divine proceeding will hold as well as it doth in this, and if it does, it muſt be a miracle of Obſtinacy, to recur to little Criticiſmes and petty Shifts, to elude the force of ſo many plain Texts, when yet in none of the Examples there is any thing at all repugnant to the divine Juſtice, or not ſufficiently deſerved by the impieties of men.

And Firſt, For *Sihon* King of the *Amorites*, it is manifeſt that he was an Idolatrous Prince, the Ruler of an Idolatrous Nation, and that the Sins of the *Amorites* in reſpect of Idolatry and of Uncleanneſs, of Carnal, and of Spiritual Fornication, of Sodomy, Beſtiality, and inceſtuous Mixtures, (For theſe are ſaid to have been the Sins

Sins of the *Amorites*, in the eighteenth, and twentieth of *Leviticus*) were now arrived to their full growth and maturity of provocation.

For *Saul*, he had provoked God to Anger by raſhly invading the prieſtly Office, in not ſtaying for *Samuel*, but ſacrificing before he came into the Camp at *Gilgal*, and he had ſpared *Agag* the Idolatrous King of the *Amalekites*, with the beſt of all the Spoile. For the firſt of which offences *Samuel* expreſly tells him, 1 *Sam.* 13. 14. *That his Kingdom ſhould not Continue, but that God had ſought him a man after his own heart, whom he had Commanded to be Captain over his people.* And at the Second, God was ſo diſpleaſed, that it is ſaid, 1 *Sam.* 15. 11. *That it repented him that he had ſet up* Saul *to be King*, and the Prophet tells him, *v.* 23. *Becauſe thou haſt rejected the voice of the Lord, he hath alſo rejected thee from being King.*

For *David*, the matter of *Uriah*, the *Hittite*, wherein there was a diſmal combination of Adultery and Murther, is ſufficient to juſtifie the proceedings

of God with him, though it is ſaid alſo that *the anger of the Lord was kindled againſt Iſrael*, ſo that the ſlaying of threeſcore and ten Thouſand, which was the Conſequence of that divine Infatuation, by which *David* Commanded *Joab* to number the people, was indeed a double Puniſhment; it was a Puniſhment to the people in their own Perſons, and it was a Puniſhment to the King himſelf, whoſe ſtrength and Glory conſiſts in the number of his People, eſpecially thoſe who are the Valiant men of his Kingdom; ſuch as he ſhould have uſe for them, and need of their Service in all his Wars and Expeditions, and there were none but ſuch at that time numbered by *David*. 2 *Sam.* 24. 9. *And* Joab *gave up the Sum of the number of the people unto the King, and there was in* Iſrael, *eight hundred Thouſand Valiant men that drew the Sword. And the men of* Judah *were five hundred thouſand men.*

For *Rehoboam*, it was a puniſhment inflicted by God, for the Idolatrous practices of his Father *Solomon*, 1 *Kings*, 11. 11, 12. *For as much as this*

this is done of thee and thou haſt not kept my Covenants, and my Statutes which I have Commanded thee, I will ſurely rent the Kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy Servant, notwithſtanding in thy dayes I will not do it, for David *thy Father's ſake, but I will rend it out of the hand of thy Son. How be it I will not rend away all the Kingdom, but I will give one Tribe to thy Son for* David *my Servant's ſake, and* Jeruſalem's *ſake, which I have Choſen.* So that it ſeems it was a Favour, that this Diviſion of the Kingdoms of *Iſrael* and *Judah* was deferred ſo long as it was; it was a puniſhment to *Solomon* himſelf, to think that he ſhould be the firſt and laſt that ſhould Inherit the entire Throne of *David* his Father, and that through his default all his Poſterity ſhould ſuffer ſo much as they did; And with reſpect to *Rehoboam* it was an Effect of God's Arbitrary Soveraignty and Dominion over men, by which he diſpoſes of Kingdoms and of Perſons according to his good pleaſure, and *no man can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him what doſt thou?* For though the Iniquities

of the *Amorites* are in the ſacred ſtory laid to the Charge of *Rehoboam*, yet that was not till after the Revolt of the ten Tribes, and the only reaſon aſſigned why God hardened the heart of *Rehoboam*, ſo that he did not hearken unto the Council of the old men, is this, *the Cauſe was from the Lord, that he might perform his ſaying, which the Lord ſpake by* Ahijah *the* Shilonite *unto* Jeroboam *the Son of* Nebat. Which deſign being in its ſelf Lawful, as well upon account of the Juſtice, as the Deſpotical and abſolute Dominion of God over his Creatures; it was indifferent in order to the bringing it to paſs, whether he firſt hardened the heart of *Rehoboam*, or firſt alienated the hearts of his Subjects from him, or what other Courſe ſoever he ſhould take.

But here it is to be noted that God choſe rather the firſt way, he did not by any ſupernatural Influence from himſelf, alienate the hearts of his people from him, and ſo make way for the diviſion of the two Kingdoms of *Judah*, and *Iſrael*, by that means; though this he might have have done

if

if he pleaſed, for the *hearts* of the people, as well as *of the King*, are *in the hands of the Lord, and like the Rivers of Waters he may turn them both, which way ſoever it ſhall pleaſe him.*

But it is very well worth our obſerving, that he choſe rather the other way, becauſe he would not give any Countenance to *rebellious Pretences*, which men are but too apt, to take up of themſelves againſt their *lawful Soveraigns*, neither are the people any where *Commended*, or ſo much as *juſtified*, or *excuſed* for following *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat*: And *Jeroboam* himſelf was ſenſible, that though God had forſaken the houſe of *David*, in a very great meaſure, and though he had by the Voice of *Ahijah* the *Shilonite* expreſſly given him the Kingdom over *Iſrael*, yet he had ſent no meſſenger to the people to tell them, they were abſolved from Allegiance to the Succeſſor of *David*, wherefore though they had ſeparated themſelves in a great Diſcontent, as fearing the effects of that *Arbitrary* power, which he threatned to exerciſe over them, yet he was fearful when this heat was over,

over, that ſcruples of Conſcience would return, and they would again acknowledge *Rehoboam* for their *Leige Lord*, and *rightful Soveraign*, wherefore knowing that nothing does ſo naturally produce an unity of Affections as *Uniformity* in divine Worſhip, nor any thing create ſuch Irreconcileable feuds, and laſting Animoſities, as the diſſentions which are raiſed about *religious* matters: He very wiſely, though very wickedly, ſets up his Calfs in *Dan* and *Bethel*, ſeizes upon all the *Levitical* Cities, which were no leſs than Forty in number in his Dominions, and ſends the *Levites* packing to *Jeruſalem*, who being thus diſgracefully baniſhed and caſt off, would be ſure to enflame the differences which were now ſo far advanced, and make the Quarrel as laſting as it was hot, and virulent on both ſides.

Nay, when God had rejected *Saul* from being King, yet the generality of the people ſtill followed him, neither are they any where blamed for having done it, notwithſtanding he made little other uſe of his power over them, but only to perſecute, and endeavour

endeavour to deſtroy *David* the man after God's own heart, whom he knew the Lord had choſen to be King in his ſtead; neither was *David* himſelf of opinion that the perſon of *Saul* was leſs Sacred, even after he was rejected by God, nay, after all this he calls him his *Maſter*, and acknowledges the Validity of that unction by which he was Anoynted by *Samuel*, to be King over *Iſrael*, and *Judah*, 1 *Sam.* 24. 6. *The Lord forbid that I ſhould do this thing, unto my Maſter the Lord's Anoynted, to ſtretch forth mine hand againſt him, ſeeing he is the Anoynted of the Lord*, *v.* 10. He calls him his Lord. *Some bad me kill thee*, ſaith he, *but mine Eye ſpared thee, and I ſaid I will not put forth mine hand againſt my Lord, for he is the Lord's Anoynted.* And in the firſt Chapter of the ſecond book of *Samuel*, when the *Amalekite* thought to Ingratiate himſelf with *David*, for having ſlain *Saul*, though he had not really done it, for it is ſaid, in the laſt Chapter of the former book, that *Saul fell upon his own Sword and died*, yet inſtead of that favourable uſage which he expected.

pected. *David ſaid unto him how waſt thou not afraid to ſtretch forth thine hand, to deſtroy the Lord's Anoynted*, *and* David *called one of the young men and ſaid, go near and fall upon him, and he ſmote him that he died*; *and* David *ſaid unto him. Thy blood be upon thy head, for thy mouth hath teſtified againſt thee ſaying, I have ſlain the Lord's Anoynted*, *v.* 14, 15, 16. And all this though he were a Stranger, *v.* 13. *And* David *ſaid unto the young man that told him, whence art thou? and he ſaid, I am the Son of a Stranger*, *an* Amalekite. So that it ſeems in thoſe days, though a King were the proper Soveraign but of one people, yet his Regal unction made his perſon Sacred and Inviolate to the whole Race of mankind, and all this after he was rejected by God, nay, and rejected from being King too, how far is it then from being true, that a King may be lawfully Murthered by his Subjects, when ever he ſtands Excommunicated by the *Pope*? And how different are theſe times wherein Kings have no Majeſty among one ſort of men, nor Prieſthood any ſanc-

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tity among an other, wherein God himſelf was pleaſed to ſay, which is according to the opinion, as well as Language of thoſe times, applicable to Kings, though it be ſpoken there, of the Nation of the *Jews*, *Pſal.* 105, *v.* 15. *Touch not my Anointed, and do my Prophets no harm.*

Ye Mountains of Gilboah, ſaith *David*, in his Pathetique Song, upon the death of his great Enemy *Saul*. *Let there be no Dew, neither let the Rain deſcend upon you, for there the Shield of the Mighty is vily caſt away, the Shield of* Saul *as though he had not been Anointed with Oyl.* And it is manifeſt that the ten Tribes, though they knew very well that God had rejected *Saul* from being King, and choſen *David* his Servant, the man after his own heart, to go in and out before his People in his ſtead, 2 *Sam.* 5. 2. *And the Lord ſaid to thee, thou ſhal't feed my people* Iſrael, *and thou ſhal't be a Captain over Iſrael.* Yet not having an expreſs Commiſſion to forſake him, they did not do it, neither did they acknowledge *David* for their King, till after the death of *Saul*.

And

And then as if *Samuel's* unction had not been ſufficient, or had extended only to the Tribes of *Benjamin*, and *Judah*, they confirmed and ſtrengthned that Title, which God by the Prophet *Samuel* had given him, by Anointing him King over *Iſrael*, in *Hebron*.

Laſtly, Though God by the Voice of *Jehu*, the Son of *Hanani*, in the 16. Chapter of the firſt book of *Kings*, had rejected the houſe of *Baaſha*, from Reigning any longer over *Iſrael*, yet neither God nor the People did approve of *Zimri*, by whom his Son *Eliah* was ſlain. For it is ſaid of the People, *v.* 16. that *when they heard that* Zimri *had Conſpired, and had ſlain the King, they made* Omri *the Captain of the Hoſt, King over* Iſrael. And the *Inſpir'd Writer* of that book, that is in effect, *God himſelf*: Brands him with the name of Traitor, *v.* 20. *Now the reſt of the Acts of* Zimri, *and his Treaſon that he wrought, are they not written in the book of the* Chronicles, *of the Kings of* Iſrael.

But I begin to be ſenſible this is a Digreſſion;

Digreſſion, therefore to return; the Caſe of *Ahab* has nothing of difficulty in it, his letting *Benhadad* the King of *Syria* eſcape, 1 *Kings*, *c.* 20. his unjuſt Robbery and Murther of *Naboth*, *c.* 21. beſides his general Character. *c.* 16. 30. that *he did Evil in the ſight of the Lord, above all that were before him*, do all conſpire to juſtifie the utmoſt Rigour of the divine Juſtice or Anger againſt him.

To conclude, for the Sons of *Eli*, their Sins which provoked God to that extremity of Wrath againſt them, are ſufficiently deſcribed, from *v.* 12. to the 25*th.* of that Chapter, wherein this Story is mentioned, and God's deſign to ſlay them is plain, from *v.* 34. where it is propheſied that they ſhould *both die in a Day*, which is exactly fulfilled, *c.* 4. *v.* 11. And now upon this Story of the Sons of *Heli*, I ſhall ſubjoyn the Judicious deſcant of R. *David Kimchi*, as I find it in the Tranſlation of *Druſius*, it being exactly the ſenſe of what I have been all this while contending for. *Volebat morte afficere eos, juxtà illud, pinguefat cor populi hujus, & dicit, con-*

fortavit

fortavit cor Pharaonis, *& induravit Dominus Deus ſpiritum ejus, & roboravit cor ejus.* Senſus, *quando homo multum peccat, prohibet Deus ab eo vias pœnitentiæ, ut recipiat pœnam ſuam, utque qui reliqui ſunt, videant & timeant; ſed improbus qui non multum peccat, aperit ei vias pœnitentiæ, ſi voluerit redire. De hoc dicitur, nolo mortem peccatoris. Sed ſi multum improbus peccet ſi reverſus fuerit ad Dominum ex toto corde ſuo, & oſtenderit hominibus etiam reſipiscentiam ſuam perfectam, & apprehenderit viam bonam ex totâ animâ ſuâ, & ex cunctis viribus ſuis, in veritate recipietur ſive admittetur pœnitentia ejus, eritque Deus ei auxilio in pœnitentiâ, ſed probans corde,* (that is, ὁ Καρδιογνώστης) *noverat veritatem, & videbat in filiis* Eli, *cor eorum non eſſe perfectum, & licet audiviſſent patrem & receſſiſſent a viâ ſuâ malâ, ſciebat non facere hoc ipſos ex toto corde ſuo, ideò voluit ut non audirent vocem patris ſui, & punitâ ſunt mortuique in improbitate ſuâ, ut homines dicerent, improbi fuerunt iſti & digni pœnâ, atque ita Juſtificarent in eis judicium. i e.* Becauſe the Lord would ſlay them) according to that

that of the Prophet *Eſay*: Make the heart of this people fat, and it is ſaid, *the Lord encouraged the heart of* Pharaoh, *and hardned his Spirit and ſtrengthned his heart.* The meaning of which is this, when a man continues in a long and obſtinate courſe of Sin, God does at length hinder him from coming to Repentance, to the end he may receive condigne Puniſhment, and that, all that ſee it may be afraid, to follow ſo pernicious an Example; but he whoſe Sins are not aggravated by ſuch provoking Circumſtances, God is graciouſly pleaſed to open him a paſſage to Repentance and amendment of Life, that he may return and be ſaved; and of him it is ſaid, *I will not the death of a Sinner.* Nay, if a man have provoked God to ſome extremity, yet if he return to the Lord with all his heart, and by a good Converſation, give viſible proofs of his Repentance to the world, and ſhall adhere to goodneſs with all his Soul, and with all his Strength, he ſhall then certainly be received again into Favour, his Repentance ſhall be a-

vaileable before God, and God himſelf ſhall aſſiſt him by his Grace in perfecting the bleſſed work of Repentance. But he who is the ſearcher of all hearts, knew very well that the hearts of the Sons of *Eli* were not right, and that though they had hearkned to the good admonitions of their Father, and had as to outward appearance forſaken their evil Courſes, yet he knew their heart would not have gone along with this appearance, and outward ſhew of Amendment. Therefore it was his pleaſure that they ſhould not hearken to the Voice of their Father, that they might be puniſhed, and periſh in their Wickedneſs, that men might ſay when they were gone, *theſe were wicked fellows, and ripe for Puniſhment*, and by that means juſtifie God's dealing with them. And to the opinion of *Kimchi*, I may add the more Ancient, and to us *Chriſtians*, the more authentick Authority of *Tertullian*, in his ſecond againſt *Marcion*, his words are theſe: *Indurat cor* Pharaonis, *ſed meruerat in exitium ſubminiſtrari qui jam negaverat Deum, qui jam*

jam legatos ejus toties ſuperbus excuſſerat, qui jam populo laborem operis adjecerat. Poſtremò quà Egyptius *olim Deo reus fuerat gentilis Idololatriæ, Ibin & Crocodilum citius colens quàm Deum unam. i e.* It is true indeed that God hardened the heart of *Pharaoh*, but it was becauſe he deſerved to be deſtroyed, for denying, and bidding defiance to the God of *Iſrael. Exod.* 5. 2. For rejecting and evilly entreating his Ambaſſadors, for exerciſing new Cruelties, and impoſing new Burthens upon the people; inſtead of freeing them from thoſe oppreſſions which they formerly groaned under. Laſtly, In that being an *Egyptian*, he was by Conſequence an *Idolater*, paying his Devotions to the *Ibis*, and the *Crocodile*, but neglecting the worſhip of the true, and only God.

But notwithſtanding the manifeſt Plainneſs, and manifold Evidence of what hath been ſaid, *Epiſcopius* and *Curcellæus*, moved only by a too paſſionate and unphiloſophicall deteſtation of *Calviniſticall* opinions, being in a bodily fear they ſhould be forced

to grant what they thought to be, and what is certainly falſe, out of an ἀμέλεια τ ἀνδολκῆς, they are carried as far the other way, and ſeek very weak Evaſions to evade the Evidence of truth.

The Sum of what they ſay, for I paſs by their poor Criticiſms, as not worthy my Notice, may be reduced to theſe three heads. Firſt, *Cum ſcriptura dicit*, ſaith *Curcellæus*, *Deum aliquem induraviſſe, eadem induratio homini tribuitur, tanquam gravis offenſa & ſevero ſupplicio digna*, Exod. 18. 15, 32. *the* 9th. 34, 35. *&* 13, 15. *Illud autem iniquum foret ſi Deus ita peccatorem induraret, ut non poſſet non indurari.* When the Scripture repreſents God, as hardening a Sinner, yet that very hardening is notwithſtanding attributed to the Sinner himſelf as a grievous offence, and ſuch as is worthy of ſevere Puniſhment, *Exod.* 18. 15, 32. the *9th.* 34, 35, and 13, 15. But now this muſt needs be unjuſt upon ſuppoſition that God does ſo harden him, that it is not in his own power to avoid it, but this makes nothing to the purpoſe.

poſe. For I ſay both of theſe Cauſes did concur, he hardened his own heart, and God encreaſed this hardneſs by a particular Judgment. The firſt was his Sin, the Second his Puniſhment, and the Concurrence of both theſe Cauſes is in my opinion ſufficiently ſignified in one of the places by him cited, that is to ſay, *Exod* 9. *v.* 34, 35. The Firſt, *v.* 34. Where this hardening is attributed to himſelf in theſe words: *And when* Pharaoh *ſaw that the Rain, and the Hail, and the Thunder were ceaſed, he ſinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his Servants.* The Second, *v.* 35. *And the heart of* Pharaoh *was hardened, neither would he let the Children of* Iſrael *go, as the Lord had ſpoken by* Moſes; but the *Lord* had ſpoken by *Moſes*, that he himſelf would harden his heart, ſo that he ſhould not let the people go: therefore this latter verſe is to be underſtood of the divine Induration, as the other of that which was voluntary and ſpontaneous in himſelf, which is likewiſe intimated in theſe words, *and the heart of* Pharaoh *was hardened*, that is, he was

paſſive in it, it was not done by himſelf, but by ſome external Cauſe, that is, by the juſt Judgment of God.

But here it may be enquired, whether the divine Induration were of that force and ſtrength, as to neceſſitate him to do what he did, without the Concurrence of his own will; for upon ſuppoſition that it was not, then he might have Acted otherwiſe than he did, by virtue of his own freedom or liberty of will, which it ſeems was not yet ſo wholly impayred as to make him utterly uncapable of doing his Duty, and then it would not be true what *God* ſaid to *Moſes*, *c.* 4. *v.* 21. *I will harden his heart, that he ſhall not let the people go.*

Again, if this divine Fatality, as I may ſo call it, were ſufficient of it ſelf to produce the effects there mentioned, without the Concurrence of the will of *Pharaoh* himſelf, and would certainly move him to do what he did by the ſame degree of Neceſſity, by which a ſtone deſcends, or ſmoak flies upwards; then it may be objected on the other ſide, that he

he was in no manner of fault, on his own part; and therefore it could not be ſaid, as it is, *c* 8. 34. *He ſinned yet more and hardened his heart, he and his Servants.*

But to theſe two things I anſwer, Firſt, That the divine Judgment was of it ſelf ſufficient to produce the effects mentioned, ſo that he could not avoid the doing what he did; and yet notwithſtanding, that the Concurrence of his own will, together with this neceſſity is a real Sin, and includes in it a no leſs guilt, than if he had been under no ſuch neceſſity at all, and that for theſe two reaſons:

Firſt, That the very nature and notion of all Sin conſiſts in a vitious and depraved choice of the mind, either directly contrary to the dictates of the underſtanding, or for want of that heed and attention which ought to have been uſed, in order to a right reformation of the Judgment in the matter to be done or avoided; and therefore whereever there is ſuch a depraved Choice, there is the Root, the Foundation, the formality and conſti-

tutive nature of Sin, which consists in the inward approbation and choice of a wicked action, which action derives all its immorality from the inward intention of the mind, and is not to speak properly the very sin it self, but only a sensible effect of it, or a conveyance of that inward pravity to the knowledge of the world.

Secondly, Though the divine Judgment might have been sufficient of it self to bring such or such effects to pass, yet it cannot be denied, but the Concurrence of the will together with it, must needs add to its efficacy and strength: and look how great this addition is, just so much is the guilt accruing or arising from that action which is the effect of both, that is, of necessity and freedom put together; and the Case is the same, as if we should suppose one Body moved against another, with that force that it would infallibly carry it along with it, and make it partake of its own motion, and Determination, yet if that other Body be at the same time in motion, and determined the same way, it cannot be denied, but it is

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the fitter to receive thoſe impulſes from without, and will the more readily comply with them, ſo that though it would have been violently carried to ſuch a place, though it ſhould have been quieſcent, when that other Body in motion happened to overtake it; yet it is plain that its antecedent motion makes it a more eaſie conqueſt to the impreſſions from without, and though the whole notion be not due to its ſelf, yet the facility or encreaſe, or Acceleration of it is, and this if the matter were not indifferent, whither it were carried; and if the Body moving were ſenſible of its motion, and capable of giving it a Check or reſtraint from within, would be either culpable or meritorious, in proportion to the greater or leſſer degrees of it.

Thus I have proved that Sin and Neceſſity, though they cannot both be from the ſame Cauſe, yet they may well enough be both of them in the ſame Perſon, as to the ſelf ſame individual Action, neither does that Neceſſity which is ſuperadded from without, deſtroy the natural and internal freedom of the mind, when they

they are both of them determined the ſame way and directed to the ſame end: but they do on the contrary mutually encourage and aſſiſt one another, and it is in the encreaſe of activity, which the free principle adds to the neceſſary Cauſe, or in the endeavour or deſire to add or contribute towards it, in which the Nature of the Sin conſiſts, which is proper only to the free Principle, but is by no means the reſult of the common Action ariſing from them both. So that it is manifeſt, as any thing in the world can be, that the place newly cited out of *Exodus*, though the moſt pertinent to their purpoſe of any they can produce, yet proves nothing at all againſt that Hypotheſis which I have laid down, or to the advantage of the *Curcellian* and *Epiſcopian* Doctrine.

Again, when it is ſaid in the place above mentioned, that *Pharaoh ſinned yet more and hardened his heart*, this may be underſtood only κατ' ἄνθρωπον, *humano more*, according to outward appearance, and the opinion of the ſtanders by: For whatſoever *Pharaoh* did, let

let it proceed out of what principle it would, whether of Neceſſity or Choice; yet by the moſt diligent obſerver in the world, it could not be diſtinguiſhed from a ſpontaneous and voluntary motion of his own mind, neither would it indeed ſeem otherwiſe to himſelf, to whom that which was in truth Neceſſity, ſeemed nothing elſe but a more obſtinate and impetuous Choice; God in his wiſdom pitching upon this way, to make his Puniſhment appear ſo much the more exemplary and uſeful to the world, by how much his patience had been the more provoked, and the Sins of the offending party more hainous and of longer Continuance: this is the natural ſence of thoſe words I have already cited out of *David Kimchi*, *Ideo voluit ut non audirent vocem patris ſui, & puniti ſunt mortuique in improbitate ſuâ, ut homines dicerent, improbi fuerunt iſti, & digni pœnâ, atque ita juſtificarent in eis judicium*, and this is likewiſe no other than *Grotius* his own learned and judicious obſervation as I have ſince found it, upon 1 *Kings*, 13. 14. In the caſe of the man

man of God who came from *Judah*, and had been tempted, after the delivery of his meſſage to *Jeroboam*, by the old *Prophet* of *Samaria*, to go into his Houſe, and eat Bread, and drink Water, *v.* 19. contrary to the expreſs command of God, *v.* 8. 9. [*Invenit eum Leo in viâ & occidit*] *Deo id ſinente*, (ſaith he) *partim ut prophetæ dicerent deſtricte parere mandatis, partim ut* Jeroboamus *in Idololatriâ magis magiſque obdureſceret, & ſic pœnarum quas pridem erat commeritus juſtitia magis appareret.* [A Lyon met him by the way and ſlew him] God ſo permitting it to be, partly that by his example all Prophets might learn hereafter to be more punctual in their obedience to the Commands of God, and partly that *Jeroboam* by the news of this event might be hardened in his Idolatry, and ſo the juſtice of that Puniſhment which he had long deſerved might appear the more viſible to men. Which obſervation of *Grotius*, if you conſider that he himſelf confeſſes how much he is beholden to many whom he has not named, in his preface to his learned Notes upon

on the *Evangelists*, may seem to have been borrowed from *Josephus*, who in the *Eighth* of his *Antiquites* has these words concerning that very occurrence, ταῦτα δὲ ἐγίνετο, οἶμαι, κατὰ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ βούλησιν, ὅπως μὲ προσέχοι τοῖς τοῦ ἰάδονος λόγοις ἱεροβόαμος ἐληλεγμένου ψεῦδος, that is, this hapned as I conceive, by the will and appointment of God, that *Jeroboam* might not hearken to the words of *Jadon*, (*so he calls the man of God*) who by this Judgment overtaking him was not unreasonably suspected to be a false Prophet.

Let us now briefly examine those other places produced by *Curcelleus*, to prove that this hardening was not of God, but was wholly owing to the stubborn perversness of *Pharaoh* himself, which places are these, *Exod.* 8. *v.* 15, 32. and *c.* 13. *v.* 15. The words of the first place are these, *But when* Pharaoh *saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart and harkened not unto them, as the Lord had said*; of the Second these, *And* Pharaoh *hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go*; of the Third these, *And it came to pass*

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when Pharaoh *would hardly let us go, that the Lord ſlew all the firſt-born in the Land of Egypt*, in all which three places in the judgment of this *Writer*, this hardening is interpreted to be the Action of *Pharaoh* himſelf.

Now though as to the Second inſtance I might oppoſe to the opinion of *Curcellæus*, the Authority of the *vulgar Latine* which tranſlates it in that place, *& ingravatum eſt cor Pharaonis*, by words of a paſſive ſignification, yet that I ſhall not ſtand upon.

But I anſwer Firſt, as hath been ſaid already that both might be and were actually true, both that he had hardened his own heart, and that it received a further hardening, a ſtronger and more inflexible degree of ſtiffneſs and obduration by the juſt Judgment of God.

Secondly, As hath been likewiſe intimated already, theſe expreſſions may be referred not to the reality of things as they were in themſelves, but to the outward appearance of them in the opinion of the world.

But then Thirdly and Laſtly, It is plain from the firſt of theſe places,

Exod.

Exod. 8. 15. That *Pharaoh*'s hardening his heart, and his not hearkning to *Moſes* and *Aaron* are one and the ſame thing, for it is ſaid *he hardened his heart, and hearkned not unto them, as the Lord had ſaid*; but now his not hearkning to *Moſes* and *Aaron* might well enough be the effect of a divine Judgment, therefore it is plain that his hardening his heart may likewiſe be oweing to the ſame Cauſe. So it is ſaid of *Rehoboam* that *he hearkned not unto the people*, 1. *Kings* 12. 15. But yet notwithſtanding it immediately follows, *for the cauſe was from the Lord, that he might perform his ſaying, which the Lord ſpake by* Abijah *the* Shilomite, *unto* Jeroboam *the Son of* Nebat. And again, *v.* 24. *Thus ſaith the Lord, ye ſhall not go up nor fight againſt your Brethren, the Children of* Iſrael, *return every man to his Houſe, for this thing is from me.*

But this place which I have laſt mentioned ſupplies *Epiſcopius* with a ſecond objection, *when* Pharaoh *ſaw that there was reſpite*, upon which words he hath this remark: *In* Pharaone

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res liquet, induravit illum deus ea actione, quæ maximè eum emollire & poterat & debebat, videlicet actione puræ putæ bonitatis tollendo, ſcilicet plagas inflictas ad voluntatem & deſiderium ipſius. And again, *manſiſſet ſine dubio in* Pharaone *hæc dimittendi voluntas, ſi deus manum iſtam ad preces* Moſis *& deſiderium* Pharaonis *non ſuſtuliſſet, ablationem itaque iſtam cauſam vel occaſionem indurationis fuiſſe dicendum eſt, at quis ablationem iſtam actionem appellet quæ ſuâ vi induraverit* Pharaonis *animum, ac non potius ſervierit ut* Pharaoh *in voluntate dimittendi populum confirmaretur.*

The meaning of all which is in ſhort this, God hardened *Pharaoh* he ſaith, by that Action which ought rather to have melted him into Repentance and Obedience to the meſſage ſent by *Moſes,* ſo then it is confeſſed he did harden him, which is all I contend for, but it ſeems he did it a new way, and indeed a very ſtrange one, by making uſe of thoſe means which were naturally fitted to ſoften and mollifie his temper; For there is no queſtion, ſaith he,

he, but *Pharaoh* would always have been of the ſame mind to let the people go, if thoſe Judgments which are recorded to have befallen the *Egyptians* had always continued; but it was the removal of thoſe Judgments and the reſpit given him betwixt them, which was the true reaſon of this Induration, and yet afterward he cries, *quis ablationem iſtam actionem appellet, quæ ſuâ vi induraverit* Pharaonis *animum?* Who would call that removal an Action, which by its own proper ſtrength hardened the heart of *Pharaoh*? So that it ſeems it was a Cauſe, and it was not, that is, in plain Engliſh, *Epiſcopius* has brought himſelf into an inconvenience and would fain get out of it if he knew but how: For he ſayes rightly that a privation cannot be a Cauſe of a real and poſitive Effect: and therefore God's removing his Judgments at the Prayer of *Moſes*, that is, the abſence of thoſe Judgments, being no more; this could not harden his heart, very right; it would have been well if he had been always of this mind, but he tells you above, *induravit illum Deus*

ea actione, God did harden his heart by this Action. The Sum of all which is, that he is in a great ſtrait and wants ſome body to help him out, for this way which he is in will never do.

It is certain that *Pharaoh's* heart was hardened, that is, he was obſtinately reſolved not to let the people go, before any meſſage by *Moſes* came to him, and this was that which the *Egyptian Kings* all along feared and endeavoured to prevent, and this was the reaſon of their ſetting hard Task-Maſters over them, *c.* 1. *v.* 10, 11. *Let us deal wiſely with them, leſt they multiply and it come to paſs, that when there fall out any War, they joyn alſo unto our Enemies, and ſo get them up out of the Land, therefore they did ſet over them hard Task-Maſters.* What then can be more clear than that they were prepared before hand, not to hearken to the meſſage of *Moſes*; as indeed without a Miracle they had no reaſon to believe it a divine Meſſage? but when *Moſes* did work ſo many Miracles, why did he not then upon his producing theſe Credentials

of

of a divine mission suffer the people to depart? why, they tell us that the *Magicians* did the same things; and therefore *Pharaoh* had no more reason to believe one than the other right, but when the *Magicians* themselves were baffled and confessed, that *the finger of God was there*, then certainly he was left without excuse; and yet his hardness continued, so that it is plain, he was hardened before any Miracles were wrought, or any Judgments inflicted, which Judgments, before they were inflicted, could not be removed; and how then can that removal be the cause of an effect, which is at least two removes in the order of nature before it?

And what *Episcopius* attributes to the intermission of Judgments, that *Curcellæus* imputes to the smallness or the lightness of them, but it is a strange thing that all the Rivers being turned into blood, the Lands being filled with Frogs, and Lice, and Flies, and Catterpillers, all the Inhabitants stumbling upon one another in a disconsolate and mournful Darkness, and tormented all over with Blaines, Botches,

and Ulcers, all their fruits, devoured, their Waters poiſoned, their Bodies diſeaſed, all the warmth light and comfort of the Sun intercepted, not ſo much as the Moon, nor the leaſt glimpſe of a Star or Planet appearing, that theſe ſhould be looked upon as ſmall matters, but what will not ſome men do, rather than confeſs they are in a miſtake?

Beſides the lightneſs of Judgments cannot be a Cauſe as being a privation, for all that was felt in thoſe Judgments, was troubleſome and heavy; and their lightneſs, if indeed they may be called light, conſiſted only in this, that they were not more heavy than they were: and if this had ſuch efficacy to harden the heart of *Pharaoh*, how hard would it have been had there been no Judgments at all?

So that leaving theſe Writers to maintain their own poſt for themſelves, which indeed is ſo diſadvantageous, that no man who is not very hardy will undertake the defence of it. I ſay that *Pharaoh* was antecedently viſited, before the inflicting of

of any of theſe Judgments whether great or ſmall, and much more before the Remiſſions, or intervals of any of them with a Spirit of Stupidity, and benummed hardneſs; by which it came to paſs that in his grievous vexations and oppreſſions of the *Iſraelites*, he had no manner of ſenſe of Juſtice or of Mercy; neither did he make any reflections upon that *Nemeſis* or vindicative juſtice, which runs through the world, and preſides over humane affairs, for the protection of the innocent, and for the puniſhment of Violence and injuſtice. This St. *Paul* after the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *Iſai.* 26. 10. calls the ſpirit of ſlumber, *Rom.* 11. 8. *God hath given them the ſpirit of ſlumber, Eyes that they ſhould not ſee, and Ears that they ſhould not hear unto this day.* A Narcotick, Lethargick, Apoplectick, drowſy Spirit, inſenſible both of Duty and of Danger; and as men in fits of a Lethargy, or an Apoplexy, are awakned ſometimes into ſome degree of Senſation, by Blifters and cupping Glaſſes, and ſcarrifications and ſuch like painful Remedies

as thoſe are. But yet afterwards may relapſe into their former ſleep, for the Cure of which theſe Remedies had not power ſufficient; eſpecially when the pain begins to mitigate which ariſes from them. So it was here, ſuch diſmal, and ſuch univerſal Judgments as overſpread the whole land of *Egypt*; did for the preſent awaken the Inhabitants into ſome ſenſe of their Sin, and of their Danger; but as ſoon as theſe Calamities were paſt by, they pleaſed themſelves with a vain opinion that all was over; they were but the more incenſed againſt the *Iſraelites*, whom they looked upon as the occaſion of all thoſe Calamities which befel them: And the more reſolved not to ſuffer them to depart, till at laſt the *Firſt-born* in every Houſe, being ſlain; ſuch an inexpreſſible Terrour did ſmite every heart, and ſhake every breaſt with a fearful apprehenſion of what might befall themſelves; that then they finally reſolved to let them go. Nay, it is ſaid, *Exod.* 12. 36. *That the Lord gave the people favour in the ſight of the Egyptians, ſo that they*

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lent unto them ſuch things as they required, and they ſpoiled the Egyptians.

Which without an other Miracle of infatuation could not have been; and yet when all this was paſt, and the *Iſraelites* were actually gone, when all the danger was over, and they had nothing now, as they thought to conſider, but what they ſhould loſe by the departure of the *Iſraelites*; the former obſtinacy and hardneſs returned, they reſolved again not to let them go, but purſued after them, and were at length utterly deſtroyed in the *Red Sea.*

Their third and laſt objection is this, that if it be true, that God does really harden mens hearts, and blind their Eyes, if he fills them with falſe Images, and erroneous repreſentations of things, in order to their Deſtruction; then he is in all theſe inſtances a Deceiver, which they are very tender of allowing the God of truth to be, but without reaſon, for though it be very true what St. *James* ſaith, *James* 1. 13, 14. *God cannot be tempted with Evil, neither* *v. Curcell. L. 4. c. 2. p. 154.*

tempteth he any man, but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own luſt and enticed; yet this muſt be underſtood only of thoſe who are not yet perfectly given up to a reprobate ſenſe, for ſuch will never ſay they are tempted of God, being not ſenſible that they are tempted at all to do any thing which is amiſs, but what they do, they do without ſcruple and without remorſe. But for others who have ſo long perſiſted in a courſe of Sin, that it becomes now almoſt neceſſary that they ſhould be made examples of the divine Juſtice, as they have been of a long time of his patience and forbearance with them, he may not only juſtly withdraw all aſſiſtance of his grace, but he may uſe all other means, which may moſt effectually contribute to the ſatisfaction of his juſtice by their Deſtruction. It is true that God would not *that any man ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to the knowleage of the truth, that ſo they may be ſaved*; but yet it is every whit as true, that he may be ſo far provoked as not only to withdraw all ſupernatural Aſſiſtances, but

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even to deprave and vitiate the faculties of Nature ſo far, that they ſhall be utterly uncapable of making a right uſe of themſelves.

Neither is there any reaſon or ground, for that extream pain and trouble which *many Divines* are in, leſt God by this means ſhould be thought the *Author of Sin*, for the thing in it ſelf is utterly unpoſſible; and therefore they will do well hereafter, not to trouble themſelves or the world any further about it: for upon ſuppoſition, that any man be neceſſitated even by God himſelf to do a determinate Action; or that the habit of his mind is ſo far depraved by the divine Judgment, that he is carried out with a violent inclination, to thoſe Actions that go by the worſt Names: In this caſe he is not looked upon as a ſpontaneous Agent; having loſt all ſenſe of goodneſs, being dead to all the differences of good and evil, and being given over to the governance of maſterleſs and unruly Paſſions, but they are to be aſcribed to that cauſe by which this neceſſity is impoſed, they are not his

Actions,

Actions, but they are the Actions of him by whom he himſelf is Acted; therefore they cannot be Sins, becauſe all Sin is an offence againſt God, and God cannot offend againſt himſelf.

I do not ſay that God does really and properly do every Action, which a deſperate and irreclaimable man as ſuch commits, but theſe Actions may be and are the effect partly of a long contracted habit, which is next kin to a neceſſity in it ſelf; partly of the divine Dereliction by withdrawing ſo much of the common grace and aſſiſtance of his holy Spirit; partly of the influence and buſie tampering of wicked and degenerate Spirits; partly that God himſelf having firſt taken from him the ordinary uſe of common Reaſon, as he did in the caſe of *Nebuchadnezzar*, and ſo put him into the condition of a Bruit; he does then to render Vice loathſome or ridiculous, or exemplary to the world, by a particular Act of his will, further inflame and heighten this Madneſs, unto all manner of extravagance and exceſs, which being

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the effect of ſo many neceſſities combined into one, is not any longer to be looked upon under the notion of a Sin, but as the effect of a fatality which cannot be avoided. And I am really of opinion that the inſtances of *Abſalom's* lying with his Fathers Concubines, in the face of the Sun in the old Teſtament, and of *Judas* betraying his Lord and Maſter, and our common Saviour in the new, one of which was foretold by *Nathan* to *David*, the other by the Prophet *David* himſelf to all mankind, are inſtances to this purpoſe, whoſe force and evidence it will be impoſſible for any man fairly to decline. And to ſeek evaſions where there is no need, is but to turn Divinity into the *Gypſie* canting of *Phanatick*, and expoſe it to the contempt of Atheiſtical and irreligious perſons.

It is ſo far from being true, that God does never deceive or impoſe upon bad men, that he does it ſometimes to the good, and yet he is the God of truth all this while; that is, he cannot be deceived himſelf, and he never deceiveth others but for the

good

good of the world. The dreams and viſions, which the Prophets of the old Teſtament were uſed to ſee, were not real but imaginary and fantaſtick things, which did notwithſtanding preſignifie real Events; and they themſelves were generally a ſort of extravagant, and ſeemingly diſtracted people, if they were not really ſo, hooted at by Boys as *Eliſha* was, deſpiſed and ſet at nought by men, as the ſame Prophet was by *Jehu's* Captains, and *Saul* when the Spirit of God and of prophecy came upon him, ſtript himſelf ſtark naked, and went without his Cloaths for an whole Night and Day together, in which prophetick fits there is no queſtion but they had other apprehenſions of things than other Mortals; and conſequently in moſt of them were deceived.

Again to put the matter yet further out of Queſtion, the *Pſalmiſt* tells us *that the wicked ſhall not live out half his days*: Length of days is the ſanction of the fifth Commandment, *honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy days may be long in the Land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*

thee. And the Wſeman among other advantages of wiſdom, that is, of virtue and goodneſs, which is indeed the true Policy, and the only Wiſdom, reckons theſe: *Length of days is at her right hand, and in her left hand Riches and Honour.* Which places are not ſo to be underſtood, as if the only ſenſe were that this is the natural conſequence of honeſt and virtuous Courſes; and that Sin and Miſery are by nature linked together, though this be true too, but it is alſo meant that God himſelf doth interpoſe by the ſecret Concurrence of his power and will, to the puniſhment of Vice, and to the ſupport, encouragement and proſperous condition of true Religion and Virtue: he does often cut off the wicked in the midſt of their Sins by a particular Judgment, he viſits them with Diſeaſes, Poverty, Diſgrace, Contempt, and Shame. He ſmote the *Egyptians* with Blanes, the *Sodomites* with Blindneſs, the *Philiſtines* with Emerods. And St. *Paul* ſpeaking of theſe *Corinthians* who were unworthy partakers of the bleſſed Euchariſt, ſaith,

faith, 1, *Cor.* 11. 30. *For this cauſe many are weak and ſickly among you, and many ſleep.*

It hath been always a part of the Religion of mankind, as well as it is now, with good Reaſon, the general belief of the Chriſtian world, that ſweeping Peſtilences, deſtructive Wars, and all epidemical and publick Evils are owing to the juſt hand of Providence, for the puniſhment of the Sins of men. Now if God may viſit men with Plagues and Diſeaſes: If he may by an expreſs Act of his will, caſt a man into a violent and burning Feavour; which no man will deny, but he may: If men in a Feavour are ſubject to delirancy, and to raveing; to have falſe notions and miſtaken apprehenſions of things, to pleaſe themſelves, with vain hopes, to be fil'd with imaginary and fantaſtick fears, which is every whit as certain as the other; then it follows plainly, not only that God may, but that he doth in very many inſtances actually deceive, for *cauſa cauſæ eſt cauſa cauſati*, he that is cauſe of the Feavour its ſelf, is the cauſe of all

thoſe

thoſe deluſions that derive their Original from it.

Now Sin it ſelf is indeed nothing elſe but the ſickneſs of the mind, it is the effect of a crazy and diſtempered Spirit, or of a luxuriant and brutiſh Body, whoſe Spirits are too maſterleſs, and blood too unruly to hear the Voice of reaſon, or ſubmit themſelves to the government of truth and Wiſdom: and why may not this as well as any other bodily diſtemper or indiſpoſition be the effect of a divine Judgment, as well as it is oftentimes of our inadvertency, and want of due conſideration? only with this difference, that in the latter caſe it is a real Sin, but in the former it has *ad extra* the appearance of Sin; but in truth and reallity its nothing ſo, as being though the conſequence of former Sins, yet the effect of a preſent neceſſity and force.

I ſhall conclude this Diſcourſe which grows very tedious to my ſelf, as well as I am ſure it muſt be to others, with theſe following ſhort Obſervations, to the advantage of what has been ſaid. Firſt, In that God's hardening

hardening the hearts of impenitent and wicked men, in order to their after Ruine, both in this world and the next, there is nothing which is not very conſonant to the expreſs authority of Scripture: beſides thoſe Teſtimonies I have already produced, you may pleaſe at your leiſure to conſider theſe that follow, *Math.* 13. 12. *Whoſoever hath, to him ſhall be given, and he ſhall have abundance, but whoſoever hath not, from him ſhall be taken even that he hath*, Rev. 22. 11. *He that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill, and he that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill*, 1. Theſ. 5. 9. *Quench not the Spirit*, that is, ſo utterly extinguiſh it, by reſiſting perpetually its friendly motions that it ſhall never return any more, 1. *Tim.* 4. 2. *Speaking lies in Hypocriſie, having their Conſciences ſeared with a hot Iron*, *Math.* 12. 32. Of the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, which conſiſted in attributing the Miracles of our Saviour to the efficiency of infernal Spirits, it is ſaid, *Whoſoever ſpeaketh againſt the Son of man it ſhall be forgiven him, but whoſoever ſpeaketh againſt the Holy Ghoſt, it*

ſhall

ſhall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. Of the relapſing to Idolatry, after haing been under the convictions of the truth of the Chriſtian Religion, itis ſaid in the firſt Epiſtle general of St. *John, c.* 5. *v.* 16. *There is a Sin unto Death, I do not ſay that he* (that is our Brother) *ſhall pray for it*; that is, there is great danger, that it will be to no purpoſe, inaſmuch as God will ſcarce ever hear or anſwer our Prayers, which are put up in behalf of ſuch a perſon; and of the ſame ſin the Author to the *Hebrews* ſays, *c.* 6. *v.* 4, 5, 6. *It is impoſſible for them who were once enlightned, and have taſted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, and have taſted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they ſhall fall away, to renew them again unto Repentance.* Which laſt place confirms what I have already ſaid, that God does in the language of *Kimchi*, *obſtruere & obſerare vias pœnitentiæ*, he does purpoſely hinder men in ſome caſes from coming to Repentance; becauſe to repent and to be forgiven are

in a manner the ſame thing, neither is there any ſo hainous and notorious offender who might not eſcape if an hearty Repentance at the laſt caſt would do, which is exactly the ſenſe of that place of the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *c.* 6. *v.* 10. *Make the heart of this people fat, and make their Ears heavy, and ſhut their Eyes, leſt they ſee with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and underſtand with their heart, and convert and be healed.* The ſecond to the *Theſſalonians*, *c.*2. *v.*11, 12. *God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſions, that they ſhould believe a lie, that they all might be damned, who believe not the truth, but have pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs.*

Laſtly, To name no more in the Epiſtle to the *Romans*, *c.* 1. *v.* 24, 25. *God gave them*, that is, the Heathen world, *alſo up to uncleanneſs, through the luſts of their own hearts*, &c. *Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worſhipped, and ſerved the Creature, more than the Creator. v.*26, 28.&c. *For this cauſe God gave them up unto vile Affections, and even as they did not like to retain God in their Knowledge, God gave them up over to a reprobate mind,*

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to do thoſe things which are not Convenient, being filled with Unrighteouſneſs Fornication, Wickedneſs, Covetouſneſs, Maliciouſneſs, full of Envy, Murther, Debate, Deceit, Malignity, Whiſperers, Backbiters, haters of God, Deſpiteful, Proud, Boaſters, inventers of Evil things, diſobedient to Parents, without Underſtanding, Covenant-breakers, without natural Affection, Unplacable, Unmerciful, than which I think a worſe Character cannot poſſibly be given.

Secondly, There is nothing in this Hypotheſis, but what is very agreeable to reaſon; but this I have already ſufficiently inſiſted upon: therefore I ſhall add no more, unleſs it be that whereas ſome are pleaſed in many caſes, where they need not, to take the work out of God's hands, and aſcribe what is done to the Malice and Cruelty of evil Spirits, working by his permiſſion in the hearts of the Children of Diſobedience: it muſt be remembred,

Firſt, That this in many particular Caſes cannot be proved.

Secondly, That theſe two Caſes are not incompatible with one another,

as I have ſhown already. Laſtly, if it be enquired how the Devils come to be thus ſpightful and malicious, one anſwer may be, that they are actuated by the divine Judgment with a Spirit of Rage, Envy, and ill Will, which is one part of their torment, and one reaſon of all the miſchief they do.

Thirdly, There is no bad conſequence attending ſuch a Doctrine as this, it will not drive men upon deſpair, becauſe the very ſuppoſition of ſuch a thing deſtroys it ſelf; his very deſpair, if he can be poſſeſſed with any ſuch melancholy paſſion, is a certain Sign that his mind is yet tender, capable of recovering its loſt Beauty and Brightneſs, and of being again a fit receptacle for the influences of the bleſſed Spirit, to co-operate with his honeſt and pious endeavours of making an effectual and thorough Reformation.

Laſtly, There is this ineſtimable benefit in it, that it puts us perpetually upon our watch; becauſe it is at God's own arbitrary will and pleaſure when he will take the forfeiture of our

our Sins, when he will ſhut up the gates of Heaven, and obſtruct all the paſſages to Repentance and amendment of Life: therefore it behoves us all the more diligently to endeavour to *make our calling and election ſure, to work out our Salvation with fear and trembling, and to take heed leſt their be in any of us an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living* God, *to exhort one another daily, while it is called to day, leſt any of us be hardened through the deceitfulneſs of Sin.*

The End.

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24 OC 62